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WORLD OF SPORT

NFL WILD CARD ROUND WRAPS UP

It's ALL in the WORLD OF SPORT TODAY

Court: Haifa Religious Council must include non-Orthodox candidates

EVELYN GORDON

THE High Court of Justice yesterday took another step toward putting non-Orthodox Jews on religious councils. It declared that a Reform and a Conservative Jew must be two of the Haifa city council's candidates for the city's religious council.

The court also ordered the Jerusalem and Kiryat Tivon city councils to reconsider their lists of religious council candidates, because of their refusal to approve Reform and Conservative candidates.

"The Orthodox monopoly has suffered another significant defeat today," said Rabbi Uri Regav, director of the Reform Movement's Religious Action Center. Regav, an attorney, had represented the petitioners.

"It's a decision that recognizes that most of the Jews in the world who go to services do not go to Orthodox services," said Jonathan Friedland, vice-president of Haifa's Conservative synagogue and one of the candidates for Haifa's religious council.

Friedland admitted that this is not the case in Israel, but said this might change as non-Orthodox institutions begin getting more money and more power.

Forty-five percent of each religious council is appointed by the local council, with another 45% appointed by the religious affairs minister and 10% by the local rabbinates. Previous court rulings have said the local council's candidates must be proportional to each party's strength on the council. Thus, for instance, if Meretz has one-seventh of the seats on the Jerusalem city council, it may

State attorney: Indict Yehezkel

The State Attorney's Office has recommended that MK Avi Yehezkel (Labor) be indicted for using Histadrut funds in his 1992 party primary campaign, Israel Radio reported last night.

The recommendation was passed on to Attorney-General Michael Ben-Yair at the end of last week. *Jerusalem Post Staff*



Some 18,000 empty chairs, representing the number of people killed in road accidents since the state's founding, were set up at Kibbutz Ga'ash to mark yesterday's one-day road safety campaign. Accident story, Page 12. (Dan Osovsky/Israel Sun)

PM, A-G at odds over intifada compensation

Peres: PA should take care of all Arab claims

EVELYN GORDON

ISRAEL should not be responsible for damages suffered by Arab residents of the territories as a result of the intifada, since they stem from what were essentially acts of war against Israel, Prime Minister Shimon Peres said yesterday.

Intifada-related damage suits are estimated to total hundreds of millions of dollars, so Peres convened a group of ministers and legal and military officials to discuss a resolution to the problem.

He said that just as Israel paid all damages to Jewish victims of the intifada, the Palestinian Authority should take care of claims by Arabs, since it is the Arabs who were responsible for the intifada.

However, Attorney-General Michael Ben-Yair rejected this

stand, saying it might not hold up in the High Court of Justice.

Ben-Yair's position is that since Israel has controlled the territories for almost three decades, it cannot claim it is not responsible for what happened there. It also cannot retroactively deny the plaintiffs' right to sue.

Ben-Yair would support taking the suits out of the courts, but only if some other mechanism is established for settling them - unless the PA agrees to take responsibility. His idea is to set up a compensation committee which would examine each case and compensate any innocent victim. Those who suffered damages because they were directly involved in intifada activity would obvi-

ously not be compensated. Finance Minister Avraham Shohat, who also participated in the meeting, sided with Peres, while Justice Minister David Liba'i said he stood somewhere between Peres and Ben-Yair.

Interior Security Minister Moshe Shabshol called for giving the PA a lump sum to compensate Arabs claiming damages from Israel.

"And on the other side, give a fund to the PA from which instances in which people were damaged can be compensated," Shabshol told Army Radio.

Peres ordered Liba'i and Ben-Yair to prepare several alternative proposals by Friday. The issue will then be brought to the

cabinet for a decision.

The government is in a hurry to resolve the issue, because it is supposed to be included in a bill to enable implementation of the interim agreement with the PLO. The first part of this bill was approved by the cabinet on Sunday, and the government wants both parts through the Knesset before the PA elections on January 20.

Let casinos open here - Gavish panel

Proper supervision is necessary

Jerusalem Post Staff

THERE is no reason not to open casinos here after appropriate legislation is passed, the Gavish Committee on Casinos said in a report submitted yesterday to the Ministerial Committee on Gambling.

Care must be taken, however, to establish the proper supervisory apparatus, and to grant the police sufficient resources to deal with potential problems, before casinos are opened, the report said.

The report noted that casino-type gambling is already available to most Israelis, in illegal casinos being run in the country's major cities; in Tabat; in gambling ships off Eilat; and in Turkey.

Thus the country is exposed to the negative aspects of gambling - such as the involvement of criminal elements and the export of foreign currency - without benefiting from the revenue generated. Among the recommendations is that a 20%-30% tax be levied on casino revenue.

There was a division of opinion among committee members as to where the casinos should be located. Those with experience in the field recommend that they be opened in major vacation spots, like Eilat and the Dead Sea, but the police would rather they be closer to the center of the country, where they could be better supervised.

Other recommendations include:

• Only five casinos should open here.

• They should be independent establishments, rather than located in hotels.

• There should be restrictions on who can enter the casino, such as a minimum age. Patrons must identify themselves and be registered. Someone who is known to be a compulsive gambler would be forbidden entry.

• Hours of business should be restricted to from early evening to early morning.

• Casinos would be forbidden to take steps common in other countries to encourage excessive gambling; for example, pumping oxygen into the casino to increase wakefulness, or extending credit to Israeli residents. Tourists could be given credit to gamble via credit cards.

• The casinos could not advertise here.

• The license to operate a casino should cost several million dollars. Potential casino operators must demonstrate extensive experience in the field and sufficient financial backing. They cannot have a criminal record.

MK Hanan Porat (National Religious Party) said last night that if the government adopted the committee's recommendations, it would be grounds for a no-confidence motion.

Irregularities are damaging PA election credibility - chief observer

JON IMMANUEL

SERIOUS irregularities by the Palestinian Authority are threatening the credibility of the Palestinian elections, the chief European observer stated yesterday.

He urged PA Chairman Yasser Arafat to "take urgent steps to try to build public and international confidence in the election process."

Carl Lidbom, head of the European Union Electoral Unit (EUEU), said in a statement that he was disturbed that the central election commission (CEC) had been set up so late (December 22). He also said last week's addition of seats to several districts was done by presidential decree and not by the CEC, and apparently not according to strict population criteria. (Gaza City now has 14% of the seats and less than 10% of the voters.)

Lidbom questioned "the political independence of the CEC" and wondered why there has been no response to his requests for a meeting with Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen), who chairs it.

The appointment of Abbas has itself been questioned, since he is a political figure and in the local PLO hierarchy is considered Arafat's deputy.

Lidbom criticized the reduction of the election campaign from 22 to 14 days, saying shortening the campaign "without any explanation breaches the Election Law and adds to the difficulties of independent candidates. It is debatable whether the 14 days now available for the official campaign can be regarded as sufficient."

"Overall, the events of the past few days have created confusion and uncertainty, and give the impression of the arbitrary use of power to redesign the electoral architecture. The EUEU believes that the series of improvisations and irregularities should now cease if the forthcoming elections are to retain any credibility."

There was no immediate response from the CEC, but Lid-

bom's statements reflect the reservations about the elections stated by many opposition candidates who are running.

The Norwegian observation delegation issued its own critique of procedures, saying that even if the delay of the opening of the campaign is considered acceptable, "we cannot see why those candidates already nominated should be denied the right to campaign."

The Washington-based National Democratic Institute for International Affairs and the Carter Center also weighed in two days ago with concerns about "timetable changes and bias in the Palestinian broadcast media against non-Fatah candidates. They were particularly concerned that police officers "will not be registered at the polling station where they vote."

This could lead to multiple-voting, they said in a joint statement, and suggested "the use of indelible ink on fingers" to reduce the risk.

Fahd hands over gov't to brother

DUBAI (Reuter) - King Fahd of Saudi Arabia handed the running of the government to his younger brother, Crown Prince Abdullah, yesterday, so he could rest after suffering a stroke in November.

The king, 73, who is also prime minister, issued the royal order asking the crown prince "to undertake the affairs of the state while we enjoy rest."

Abdullah, about a year younger than King Fahd, accepted the task and told the king he would consult him when necessary.

"I shall return to you whenever I find myself in need of guidance from your directives and recommendations," he said in an acceptance message sent to the king.

He also wished the monarch long life and good health and pledged his allegiance.

Full story, Page 5

Report: Airships may replace Golan early-warning stations

ON LEVY

DEFENSE authorities are examining airships for possible use as an alternative early warning systems on the Golan Heights, Israel Television's Channel 1 reported last night.

The airships under consideration - rigid balloons carrying an equipment gondola - are capable of cruising at up to 100 kilometers per hour and could reportedly function in place of the IDF early-warning ground stations on Mt. Hermon.

The type of airship proposed was developed by the US Westinghouse Corporation. It is gas-filled and designed to cruise at an altitude of some 10,000 feet, carrying a payload of some seven tons.

Rafael, the Armaments Development Authority, is also reportedly in the race to develop an aerial surveillance system based on a balloon. However, the Rafael model is said to be one that would be tethered in place at a much lower altitude, similar to the observation balloons used by the IDF in the Sinai.

Similar airships are in use for a variety of military and civilian purposes around the world. In the US, for example, the Goodyear blimp is a familiar advertising vehicle, and other airships carry passengers on air tours over cities and other scenic sites.

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Fighting continues in security zone

Sneh confirms IDF uses dart-filled shells

HEAVY fighting continued in parts of south Lebanon yesterday as Hizbullah continued attacking IDF and South Lebanese Army positions.

Late Sunday night, gunmen opened fire with anti-tank weapons and mortars at IDF and SLA positions in the Soujoud area, in the eastern sector of the zone.

There were no casualties, although the attack sparked exchanges that continued sporadically into the early hours of yesterday morning.

Around noon yesterday, gunmen launched Katyusha rockets at IDF and SLA outposts deep in the heart of the security zone, in the eastern sector, not far from the northern border.

Reports from Lebanon said some of the rockets exploded near the positions, less than one kilometer north of Metulla. Several rounds of mortars were also fired at the posts, as well as Sagger anti-tank missiles.

There were no casualties or damage. IDF gunners returned fire, blasting Hizbullah targets north of the zone.

Later in the afternoon, gunmen detonated an explosive

device alongside an SLA patrol in the Jezzine enclave north of the security zone.

Simultaneously, several rounds of mortars were fired at the soldiers, who escaped unhurt although an armored vehicle was reported to have been damaged. SLA gunners returned fire.

Meanwhile, Health Minister Ephraim Sneh yesterday confirmed, in an interview with Israel Radio, that the IDF is using dart-filled shells known as flechette rounds.

Sneh said the shells were designed for use against infantry and were highly effective in the battle against terrorists in south Lebanon.

He noted that there were many other types of armaments that had specific purposes, such as anti-aircraft and anti-tank shells and missiles.

The flechette shells were a "very good weapon and most effective for hitting infantry targets," said Sneh, a former IDF commander in south Lebanon.

Sneh maintained that the use

of flechette ammunition was completely legitimate.

"We are, in effect, fighting infantry - terrorists - and they are targets for this ammunition. I don't see any ethical constraint here," he said.

Lebanese authorities have charged that the shells constitute an indiscriminate weapon and as such are banned by the Geneva Convention.

UNIFIL has also protested to the IDF over the use of the shells after three soldiers from the force's Norwegian battalion were wounded by flechette rounds fired at them by mistake by an IDF tank last month.

Another Norwegian UNIFIL soldier was killed in a similar incident, which occurred in the same area, near Blatt village inside the security zone, two years ago.

A Lebanese civilian was killed and five other people wounded by flechette shells fired by IDF tanks in Kabriha village north of the security zone last Friday.

The firing on that occasion had come in response to an attack by Hizbullah on IDF and SLA positions in the Kantara region, in the western sector of the zone.



An elderly Palestinian yesterday joins Palestinian policemen in a traditional folk dance in Bethlehem's Manger Square, during celebrations marking Fatah Day, which marks the founding of the organization 31 years ago. The day passed quietly. (Reuters)

Shamgar Commission resumes hearings

BILL HUTMAN

THE Shamgar Commission reopens hearings today after a two-week recess, amid growing concern in the General Security Service that the inquiry's findings will lead to a major upheaval in the service.

Tomorrow, attorney Eli Zohar, who is representing GSS head "K," has been summoned to appear before the commission. K and five other GSS officers, and a senior police officer, were sent letters last month warning they may be found responsible for security breaches leading to the assassination of prime minister Yitzhak Rabin.

The seven officers all have the right to appear before the commission to defend themselves against the allegations.

Y, who formerly headed the GSS security department, and M, former VIP protection department head, are scheduled to testify today.

Amos Goren, a former GSS agent with the VIP protection department who spoke out strongly against the department's operations even before Rabin's murder, is to testify before the commission tomorrow.

Orr: Response to Katyushas not tied to talks with Syria

LIAT COLLINS

THE IDF is considering when and how to react to the Katyusha attacks on the North, according to Deputy Defense Minister Ori Orr (Labor).

Answering several motions to the Knesset agenda on the weekend attacks on Kiryat Shmona, Orr said the decision on how to respond is not related to the negotiations with the Syrians.

"Any consideration on whether and how to act against Hizbullah is completely detached from the Syrian [issue]. It's a purely military decision. You must understand that a military action is unlikely, but any action would probably bring quiet for only a limited period," he said.

Orr noted many solutions had been tried in the past, including a wide and a narrow security zone. "We've been in Beirut and we've been in Juniyeh," he said.

"That's nothing that hasn't been tried in Lebanon."

He rejected a call by Ovadia Eli (Likud) to mount a massive artillery attack against Lebanese villages: "Would that bring about quiet in the area?" he asked.

Orr implied that Iran was behind Hizbullah's actions and said: "To the best of our knowledge, the weekend attack could not be linked with the Syrians. Hizbullah does not ask Syria's permission before every action."

Answering earlier motions on Yasser Arafat's speeches calling for the "liberation" of Jerusalem, Orr said Israel and the Palestinians are "undoubtedly divided on the subject."

But, he said, "I believe we and the Palestinians will find a way to live together side by side, not within the 1967 borders, but within borders much wider."

Hariri: Peace is imminent

BEIRUT (AP) - Lebanon will become the major economic and tourist center of the Middle East once a peace treaty with Israel is signed, Prime Minister Rafik Hariri said in remarks published yesterday.

In an interview with the Beirut daily *Al-Nahar*, Hariri said peace in the Middle East is "imminent" following the resumption of negotiations between Syria and Israel.

Asked what would be Lebanon's role after Israel signs peace accords with Syria and Lebanon, he said, "Lebanon will be the financial, commercial, cultural and touristic center of the region."

Hariri, who came to power three years ago after a deepening economic crisis brought

down the previous government, added, "All preparations we made in the past three years were designed to prepare the country for peace, if it happened, and to help it stand fast if peace did not materialize."

Hariri's government has launched a multi-billion-dollar program to rebuild Lebanon from the devastation of the 1975-90 civil war, which killed more than 150,000 people and wreaked \$25 billion worth of property damage.

Hariri rejected the theory that Lebanon's role will be decided in Syrian-Israeli talks. "We decide our role. When we go to the negotiations, our role will be defined by our own will," he said.

Coalition chairman upset over 'unnecessary' use of waiver

LIAT COLLINS

COALITION and Labor faction chairmen MK Ra'anan Cohen yesterday warned the government the faction would not be turned into "a rubber stamp." He also accused ministers of opening themselves up to justified criticism by the opposition over the way the government presented the bill on the implementation of the interim agreement with the Palestinians.

The bill contains clauses which need to be approved to allow the Palestinian Authority elections to go ahead on January 20 as planned. It was approved by the cabinet on Sunday.

"It's a serious abuse of what is written in the Knesset House Rules. It's just playing into the opposition's hands in a big way," said Cohen. "Why couldn't they [the government] have prepared it just that much earlier and avoided all these accusations by the opposition?"

"That's why I warned the government that, just like they knew to prepare the bill months ago, they should have known to submit it on time instead of skipping the [48-hour] clause. It's not respectable; it's not nice; and it's not healthy. And it's definitely not democratic. It gives the appearance of making a mockery of

the Knesset procedure.

"This is not what the House Rules intended. The waiver was meant for truly special cases. The reasons given [for the waiver] were not convincing. And I don't want the faction to turn into a rubber stamp," said Cohen.

In order to rush the bill through its three Knesset readings, the government asked the House Committee to approve the waiver of the rule demanding that 48 hours elapse between a bill being submitted to the Knesset and the plenum discussion.

House Committee chairman Elie Goldschmidt (Labor) used his automatic right to approve the waiver, but not before bearing severe criticism of the handling of the bill from both coalition and opposition MKs.

The deputy attorney-general in charge of legislation, Shlomo Guberman, told the committee the bill must pass by January 20. "It's a matter of international obligations," said Guberman. "All we're asking is for the committee to give MKs a chance to exercise their rights to review the law by bringing forward the reading of the bill."

The bill is expected to come up in the plenum today.

Petition over bypass road withdrawn

EVELYN GORDON

THREE Al-Bira residents yesterday withdrew a petition to the High Court of Justice against an addition to the Ramallah bypass road, after the state promised to re-evaluate the need for it in a year.

The petition was filed against a 250-meter addition to the road, meant to ensure that it passes through territory controlled solely by the IDF. To build it, the petitioners' land was expropriated for five years.

Attorney Avigdor Feldman, representing the petitioners, said the expropriation could not be justified by security needs, because the Palestinian Police are committed to peace with Israel and would not harm settlers.

However, government attorney Yehuda Sheffer pointed out there are still many opponents of the peace process in the territories, some of whom might well wind up in the Palestinian Police.

Justices Shlomo Levine, Yitzhak Zamir, and Tova Strasberg-Cohen seemed inclined to accept Sheffer's argument. Feldman, therefore, agreed to a compromise whereby the road will be built, but the need for it will be re-evaluated.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Carmela Buhbut goes free today
Carmela Buhbut, who was convicted in October 1994 of killing her husband after he had abused her for 24 years, is being released from prison today. Buhbut had originally been sentenced to seven years' imprisonment for the February 1994 killing, but the Supreme Court, in response to her appeal, reduced her sentence to three years. A third of her sentence was then taken off for good behavior. *Lim*

'People to People' to link Arabs and Jews
Deputy Defense Minister Ori Orr yesterday invited the mayor of Kfar Sava and the head of the Emek Hefer Local Council to join in a pioneering project to create mutual trust among residents of neighboring Palestinian and Israeli towns. Named "People to People," the project will foster exchange visits by community leaders, police officials, high school pupils, and so on. *On Levy*

Barak meets settlement leaders
Three settlement leaders met with Foreign Minister Ehud Barak yesterday, continuing a dialogue with government ministers that has been taking place with increasing frequency since the Rabin assassination. Shlomo Katan, head of the Alfei Menashe Local Council, said that Barak seemed surprised at a number of matters the settlement leaders raised, including why building in Alfei Menashe is frozen. *Herb Keiron*

Hamas disavows 3 members' candidacies
Hamas issued a leaflet yesterday dissociating itself from the candidacies of three of its members - Ismail Haniyeh, Khalaf Hindi, and Said Namrouli - who declared their candidacies as independents on Sunday, along with a fourth Islamic activist, Nasser Muzaini. Meanwhile, former Hamas weekly *Al-Watan* editor Imad Falouji, who is running as an independent, said in the daily *Al-Ayyam* that, "There are many, not only in Hamas, but in the Islamic movement, who call for building a Palestinian society on a sound, democratic basis." *Jon Immanuel*

Teenager gets 16 years for killing Arab
The Jerusalem District Court yesterday sentenced to 16 years a Jewish teenager who shot to death a Palestinian farmer as he tended his field. The youth, a resident of Shilo, was 16 at the time of the murder in December 1993. The youth had fled to the US but later turned himself in. He had pleaded innocent, but was convicted last month based on testimony from Fatma Abu-Awad, widow of the slain Khamis Abu-Awad. The name of the teen-aged settler has not been made public, because he was tried as a minor. *(AP)*

Negotiators meet with ambassadors
Israel's negotiators with Syria yesterday briefed the ambassadors of Egypt and Jordan in Washington about the progress of the talks, Israel Radio reported last night. Chief negotiator Uri Savir told them the Syrian representatives are determined to achieve progress toward peace, but that Israel expects more substantive concessions.

Zvillil blasts Ben-Eliezer plan
Labor Party secretary-general Nissim Zvillil yesterday strongly condemned Housing Minister Binjamin Ben-Eliezer's proposal that Israel pay the PLO to curtail terrorism over the next 10 months to enable Labor to win the elections. "I am strenuously opposed to any outside interference in Israel's electoral process," he stressed. *Sarah Honig*

Riskin: Life more important than land
"When push comes to shove, life is more important than land. Better a broken land and a whole people, than a broken people and a whole land," Rabbi Shlomo Riskin, of Efrat, told a mainly hostile audience at the Chief Rabbinate in Jerusalem last night. Riskin said that while he would continue to fight for the existence and growth of Jewish communities in the territories, he would go along if a majority vote mandates that the settlers must leave. "We have to accept democratic rules," he said. *Greer Fay Cashman*

Two women MKs receive death threats
MKs Naomi Chazan (Meretz) and Yael Dayan (Labor) yesterday received death threats due to their support for homosexuals and lesbians. Police are investigating. *Liav Collins*

We mourn the passing of our beloved father, brother and grandfather

WALTER B. HARBURGER 77

formerly of Jerusalem and San Francisco

who died on January 1, 1996, in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

The family:

Jordan and Shella Harburger, son and daughter-in-law
Fritz (Peretz) Harburger, brother
Ruth Cohen (nee Harburger), sister
Neely, Noah, and Aleeza Harburger, grandchildren

Burial today, January 2, 1996, at Har Hamenuhot, Jerusalem. For more details, please phone (02) 815138.

The Honorary Consul for Barbados in Israel in deep sorrow, has the duty to inform that

H.E. Dame Nita Barrow, GCMG, DA,
Governor General of Barbados

passed away on December 19th, 1995.

A book of Condolence will be opened at 57 Hakedma Street, Herzliya Pituach on Thursday January 4th between 10am - 1pm and 4pm - 6pm

THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM mourns the passing of

CHARLES SMITH
of Washington, D.C.

Honorary Governor and long-time supporter and expresses its condolences to Robert H. Smith, Honorary Chairman of the University's Board of Governors, and the entire family.

(Continued from Page 1)

appoint one-seventh of the city council's religious council candidates.

Previous court rulings have also stated that non-Orthodox Jews may serve on the councils, as long as they favor the provision of religious services. Non-Orthodox Jews can only be disqualified if they are personally unsuitable for some reason.

However, the Haifa, Kiryat Tivon, and Jerusalem city councils all rejected the Reform and Conservative candidates proposed by Meretz. Meretz therefore petitioned the court, charging that its candidates were disqualified solely for their religious affiliation.

In Haifa's case, Justices Elishah Mazza, Zvi Tal, and Tova Strasberg-Cohen noted that all the council members had praised Meretz's candidates on a personal level. They were disqualified only because of their religious af-

HAIFA

iliation, and this is unacceptable, the justices said.

In the case of Jerusalem and Kiryat Tivon, however, there was never any discussion of whether Meretz's candidates were suitable on the individual level. The court therefore ordered the two city councils to hold a discussion on this subject and vote again on the candidates within 60 days.

The court rejected a suggestion by the mayor of Kiryat Tivon that the religious council membership should be set not according to the relative strength of the political parties, but according to the relative weight of different religious streams among consumers of religious council services. This criterion would effectively prevent Reform and Conservative Jews, who are only a tiny fraction of this group, from being represented on the councils. However, said Mazza, religious council mem-

bership is a purely political, rather than a religious issue.

Tal, who is the court's only religious justice, supported the verdict. However, he suggested that if religious council membership is really a purely political issue, it should be possible to reject candidates due to coalition considerations, as is done with respect to other political issues.

Haim Shapiro adds:
Haifa Chief Rabbi She'ar-Yashuv Cohen, who is likely to be the first to be actually faced with candidates who are members of the Conservative and Reform movements, said that he is not concerned with the affiliation of religious council members, but rather whether they are personally observant.

It is possible, Cohen said, that someone affiliated with the Conservative movement could be acceptable, although he doubted if someone affiliated with the Reform movement could be.

Meet the Author: Masha Greenbaum

But Who really counts?

THE JEWS OF LITHUANIA

A fascinating lecture and discussion in English by Masha Greenbaum, author of "The Jews of Lithuania".

Wednesday, 3 January at 10:30 a.m.

Beit Wiza, 3 Klausner St. Ramat Hashikma (Public welcome)

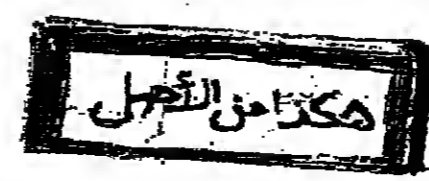
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NEWS IN BRIEF

Jordan, Israel jointly fighting pests
Cooperation among Jordanians, Palestinians, and Israelis is expected to kill off mosquitoes and flies plaguing Jordan Rift residents.

According to Prof. Yoel Margalit, of Ben-Gurion University's life sciences department, "Now that we understand the problem, we can work on a practical solution to wipe out the pests in cooperation with the Jordanians and Palestinians."

Peace Watch to monitor PA elections

Peace Watch, the independent Oslo accords monitoring group, has been notified by the Palestinian central election committee that it may serve as an official observer of the Palestinian elections.

Article V of the Oslo 2 accords states that observers including those representing non-governmental organizations will also be present. Peace Watch publishes in-depth reports on Israeli and Palestinian compliance with the accords. It has been especially watchful of the election process.

Cialit losing fewer members than expected

Kupat Holim Cialit was the only health fund to suffer a relative decline in membership over the past six months—but the drop was lower than some had expected.

According to official National Insurance Institute statistics, Cialit's share of the country's 5.49 million residents is now 66.74%, compared to 67.61% at the end of June. Maccabi has 17.08%, compared to 16.57%; Leumit 8.56%, compared to 8.41%; and Menhedet 7.62%, compared to 7.41%.

Two kibbutz officials suspected of fraud

Two kibbutz officials were released on bail yesterday by Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court yesterday after they had been arrested on suspicion of fraud.

Carmel Doron, 39, of Kibbutz Shoval, the legal adviser to the Kibbutz Artzi movement, and Micha Rinat, 60, of Kibbutz Mizra, the manager of Tali, a subsidiary of the Phoenix company, are suspected of having transferred tens of millions of shekels from the firm, which is owned by Kibbutz Artzi, to another firm, to help Kibbutz Artzi avoid paying creditors.

2 convicted for spitting on Rabin's grave

Avraham Birnbaum, 19, and Yehuda Kugel, 20, students at the Be'er Hatorah yeshiva in Jerusalem, were convicted of illegally entering a cemetery and dishonoring the dead by the Jerusalem Magistrate's Court yesterday.

The two were arrested at 2 a.m. on November 15 after they were discovered spitting on Yitzhak Rabin's grave. They both expressed remorse, and Kugel even offered to "go to the grave and ask Rabin for forgiveness."

Report: Booming business in plagiarism

A number of firms are doing a thriving business in selling research papers to university students throughout the country, Army Radio reported yesterday.

A proposal for an academic paper, including an outline, introductory chapter, and bibliography, can cost between NIS 2,000 and NIS 3,500. A full research paper can cost between NIS 7,000-NIS 9,000, while a doctoral thesis can run tens of thousands of shekels.

Tel Aviv University rector Prof. Dan Amir said his university is aware of the problem, but that it is very hard to combat.

The owner of one such firm insisted that his is a legitimate business, that gives receipts for its work. "It's a research report like any other," he said. "What you do with it is your own private business."

Safed resident turns 100

Tanhum Gurelik, a recent immigrant from Latvia, celebrated his 100th birthday in his new hometown of Safed yesterday. Speaking with the press after a congratulatory visit by the mayor, Gurelik said the secret of his longevity is keeping calm and enjoying life.

Israel Prize winners named

Prof. Shlomo Avineri, Moshe Barash, and Meir Sternberg were named yesterday as winners of this year's Israel Prize; Avineri in the field of political science, Barash in art history, and Sternberg in literary criticism.

Court rejects private eye's petition

The High Court of Justice yesterday rejected a petition by private investigator David Spector, which asked the state to give him numerous documents relating to him from its investigation of the media wiretapping case.

'Palestinian teens imprisoned with adults'

JON IMMANUEL

DOZENS of Palestinian 16- and 17-year-olds are being held in military prisons together with adults, although they are considered minors under international law, and are kept separate from older inmates in civilian Israeli jails, according to Defense of Children International.

Spokesman Philip Veermon said yesterday that the organization is concerned because a B'tselem report showing widespread torture of some prisoners by others in Ketziot "indicates that the IDF is not able to protect prisoners under its jurisdiction."

He said there is no justification for the IDF to treat 16-year-olds as adults.

DCI has requested a meeting with the chief military prosecutor on the matter.

The IDF military prosecutor is looking into the matter, the IDF Spokesman said yesterday.

Veermon said there were at least 25 such teenagers in Ketziot, who he knew were held together with adults.

"We know that 1,000 prisoners are to be released this month because of the elections and hope that the minors will be released too," he said.

He estimated some 150 youths in jail, most of whom were arrested last year and detained without charges.

In a non-security related case recently, a 17-year-old Palestinian was sentenced to 5 1/2 years for stealing a car in Petah Tikva. He will not be held with adults, but apart from the severity of the sentence, he will not be rehabilitated as Israeli youths convicted of similar offenses would be, since there are no rehabilitation programs for Palestinian youth in Israel, Veermon said.

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Security to be on full alert for Hussein's Tel Aviv visit

RAINE MARCUS

SECURITY forces will be on full alert for King Hussein's anticipated visit to Tel Aviv next Wednesday.

Although the police have not yet made final arrangements, sources said that more than 1,500 policemen, border policemen, soldiers, and other security personnel will guard each place Hussein is scheduled to visit. Reinforcements will also be brought in from other districts if necessary.

The Jordanian king's first public appearance in the city is the naming of a trauma unit

at Ichilov Hospital after murdered prime minister Yitzhak Rabin. He will also visit Kikar Rabin, where the prime minister was assassinated on November 4.

Hussein will arrive by helicopter, landing at the city's Sde Dov Airport. Large sections of the city will be sealed off as Hussein is expected to visit other sites. But a senior police officer yesterday was quite calm about the procedures.

"We have guarded American President Bill Clinton and other dignitaries, so Hussein's visit, although an historical one, should not present insurmountable security problems for us," he said.

From Tel Aviv Hussein will continue to Beit Gavriel, on the shores of the Kinneret, where he will participate in a peace award ceremony honoring Jordanian Ambassador to the US Faiz Tarawneh and Elyakim Rubinstein for their promotion of peace between Israel and Jordan.

Jews return to Joseph's Tomb

HERB KEINON

THE IDF allowed 40 yeshiva students and worshippers into Joseph's Tomb in Nablus yesterday, the first time it has been opened to more than a token number of students since the city was handed over to the Palestinians three weeks ago.

At the same time, three of the 13 Jews issued administrative orders barring them from entering the tomb appealed those orders before a military court.

The IDF Spokesman said that until further notice, only 40 people will be allowed into the tomb at a time, and they will be driven there in IDF vehicles from the Kawara Junction, south of Nablus.

"We have returned," said Hillel Lieberman, a student at the Od Yosef Hai yeshiva.

But, he said, because of the administrative orders which have barred three of the yeshiva's main rabbis from entering the compound, and because of the new situation in Nablus, "we have mixed emotions."

"On one hand we are obviously very happy to be back, after not being here for so long. On the other hand, the situation is not what it used to be."

Under the Oslo agreement, Palestinian policemen are stationed outside the site, non-uniformed IDF security officers are inside, and joint Palestinian-Israeli units patrol the access routes.

Lieberman said he had no contact with the Palestinian policemen. "I didn't go outside [the compound]," he said, "and since we drove here in military vehicles, we didn't see much."



New OC Navy Adm. Alex Tal has his insignia uncovered yesterday by his wife as Prime Minister and Defense Minister Shimon Peres and Chief of Staff Lt-Gen. Amnon Lipkin-Shahak look on.

Sarid: Local councils must check radon levels in schools

BATSHEVA TSUR

ALL local councils will be obliged to check radon concentrations in ground-floor school classrooms, Environment Minister Yossi Sarid said yesterday, following the discovery of abnormally high levels of the gas in a Jerusalem school.

Sarid told a meeting of the Knesset's Education Committee that the school in Jerusalem's East Talpote section would remain closed at least until the end of the week, as his ministry continues to look into the radon concentrations there.

"As long as there is any doubt, no pupil will study there," Sarid said after committee chairwoman

Dalia Itzik (Lahor) demanded that pupils study only in rooms where radon levels are below permitted levels.

Sarid said that his ministry's experts and others believed that the gas may have been released by the recent earthquake. Bot experts from the Sorek nuclear research center, who were at the meeting, said this was unlikely.

Meanwhile, anxious parents and teachers demanded that a full inquiry into the source of the gas be held. They were joined by the husband of a teacher, who had originally requested that the radon levels be checked after she contracted cancer.

Ofra resident runs roadblock, drives through Ramallah

HERB KEINON

ERNA Korvos, of Ofra, flying a large Israeli flag on her car, drove through Ramallah yesterday on her way to Jerusalem, even though the city - which was handed over to the Palestinians last week - has not yet been opened to Israeli traffic.

IDF soldiers at the roadblock at the entrance to the city reported that when Korvos reached the roadblock, she sped through it and did not listen to their directives.

"I have driven on the road for 16 years," Korvos said. "I don't have to stop using it now."

Korvos, who drove through the town with a hitchhiker she had picked up, said that no one tried

to stop her.

"They don't touch us," she said of the Palestinian Police. "We must remain here. It is a mitzva to live here, and we must stay here."

Korvos said that the Ramallah bypass road, which serves residents of Beit El and Ofra, is too narrow. "It is dangerous to drive there. It is crowded, and people drive very fast," she said. "It also takes me a lot longer."

As to whether driving through Ramallah with a large Israeli flag is safe, Korvos said, "I am only afraid of God."

Korvos said that she tried to

drive through Ramallah on Sunday morning, but was turned back by an IDF-manned roadblock.

"They told me the city would be opened the next day, so I went back."

Korvos said that she did not get any response while driving through Ramallah. "No one stopped me," she said. "There was no response. I didn't see the police."

Korvos drives to the Shalom al Yisrael synagogue in Jericho every other week, and said she is used to the Palestinian Police. "They don't worry about us," she said. "We have no contact with them."

Forum to discuss Yehalom's voting for colleague on budget

NEWS footage showing MK Shaul Yehalom (National Religious Party) stretching over his sleeping colleague MK Hanan Pnati to vote for him on a budget clause last week is to be discussed today by the Knesset House Committee.

A complaint by Coalition Chairman MK Re'anan Cohen (Labor) has also been filed to the Knesset Ethics Committee.

The vote took place during last week's lengthy budget debate. The Channel 2 tape clearly shows Yehalom pressing the two buttons at his own seat before reaching over Pnati and pressing the buttons for him, too.

The electronic voting system requires MKs to simultaneously press two buttons on their consoles, that are about an arm's length apart. There is a 10-second period in which the vote is recorded.

"In all my years in the Knesset I have never seen anything like it," said Cohen. "It's a serious, dangerous and unprecedented act which cannot just be ignored."

Yehalom refused to comment, saying he would give his explanation to the House Committee today.

Let's start making next year better now!

Last year The Jerusalem Post Funds cared for the needy elderly, gave to the underprivileged children, as well as granting scholarships for higher education to new immigrants and young Israelis completing military service. Starting at Rosh Hashana we will be opening this year's campaign to brighten the days of the needy, young and old.



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JDC - Brookdale Institute Center for Children and Youth. Invites the Public to a Lecture on the Topic: Learning from the Resilient: Recognizing the Ways in which Children-at-Risk Rise to the Challenges of Adversity. to be given by Steven J. Wolin, M.D. Sybil Wolin, Ph.D. on January 16, 1996 from 14:00-16:00 at the JDC-Brookdale Institute. Steven and Sybil Wolin are the co-authors of The Resilient Self: How Survivors of Troubled Families Rise Above Adversity, and co-directors of Project Resilience, Washington D.C. For further information: Tel. 02-6537468

Revelers say goodbye to '95, hello to '96

Japan welcomes Year of the Rat

NEW YORK (AP) - Around the world, it was time to bid 1995 a fond farewell and herald the start of a new year.

Bells and whistles welcomed the Year of the Rat in Japan and nature-lovers saluted the end of 1995 in the nude on a chilly French beach.

In New York City, vendors crowded the streets hawking hats and noisemakers for the annual monster party in Times Square. The centerpiece of the revelry was a new ball outfitted with strobes, halogen lamps, a fog machine and 12,000 rhinestones.

After four years of war, the people of Sarajevo were able to savor the simple pleasures of warmth and light and to hope for enduring peace.

In central Sarajevo's pedestrian zone, neighbors and friends shook hands and embraced, wishing each other better fortune in 1996. The shattered city was dotted with warm lights provided by restored electricity, and people gathered in their apartments, bars and cafes to celebrate.

Millions of Japanese streamed to shrines and temples to pray for no repeats of 1995's terrors - the devastating Kobe earthquake and Tokyo subway gas attack - and welcomed the Year of the Rat with a clamor of bells and whistles.

The rat, which starts a new 12-year cycle in the Oriental zodiac, symbolizes wealth. In farming communities of the past, a house without rats was a house without grain.

About 3,000 Chinese climbed a section of the Great Wall outside Beijing as part of a campaign to promote outdoor sports and physical fitness. The organizers, including the Chinese Mountaineering Association, had hoped to draw 10,000 climbers.

Thousands braved temperatures of 5 degrees Fahrenheit (-17 Celsius) in Moscow's Red Square to ring in 1996. As the clock on the Kremlin's Spassky tower chimed midnight, they set off a fusillade of firecrackers, smashed champagne bottles and posed for photos with military guards in



Tens of thousands of people brave a foggy, cold night in London to ring in the New Year at Trafalgar Square. (AP)

front of the Lenin mausoleum.

One reveler was dressed as Lenin, others as Father Frost and his sidekick, Snow Maiden.

Fireworks also lit up the harbor in Sydney, Australia. Twelve people were arrested at Bondi Beach after police were pelted with rocks and bottles while trying to dis-

perse a crowd of several hundred revelers. No one was seriously injured.

In Montpellier, France, 80 nudists washed off 1995 with a Sunday afternoon skinny dip in the Mediterranean. The sun was shining at the French Riviera town, but the water was a cool 48 degrees F (9 C).

In Boston, which lays claim to throwing the country's original First Night celebration, more than one million people packed the streets to celebrate, without alcohol. Their evening was capped by a midnight fireworks display over the harbor.

In Las Vegas, it cost \$10 to enter downtown's glittering Fremont Street as officials tried to avoid a rowdy, bottle-throwing clash like one with police a couple of years ago.

"It's wall-to-wall people on the Strip," said Nevada Highway Patrol Trooper Steve Harney. "But they've been very cooperative."

With confetti raining down, an estimated 500,000 revelers came together at America's most famous New Year's Eve party to watch a flashier, refurbished version of the famous Times Square ball mark the beginning of 1996.

Mayor Rudolph Giuliani activated a laser to bring down the flashier, revamped ball from its pole. The high-tech system replaced the six men who used to lower the 225-kilo sphere with pulley ropes.

The new sphere was outfitted with strobes, halogen lamps, a fog machine and 12,000 rhinestones.

The celebration turned deadly in Italy and the Philippines, at least 11 people were killed and hundreds were injured as residents defied a ban on powerful firecrackers and guns. Police and health officials yesterday said six of those killed were hit by stray bullets, two got blasted by firecrackers, and two were stabbed in drinking sprees.

One woman victim died after she was hit by a bullet fired by a drunk theological seminary student in the southern city of General Santos.

In Italy, three deaths were blamed on New Year's Eve fireworks, including a 16-month-old baby who swallowed explosives and a nine-year-old girl hit in the head by an exploding rocket while she celebrated with friends.

India vacations, big desserts are hot in '96

DENVER (AP) - What will be in for 1996: big desserts, flying squirrels and vacations in India.

That's according to *The American Forecaster Almanac 1996*, so hip that its 13th edition has its own site on the Internet's World Wide Web.

Author Kim Long bases his 244-page forecast on gleanings from hundreds of newspapers, magazines, trade journals, newsletters, surveys, databases and statistics.

In his 1995 almanac, Long accurately predicted the waning popularity of Mighty Morphin Power Rangers, but missed the mark when he forecast that the Dow Jones stock average would peak at 4100. It ends the year above 5100.

His newest findings point up one trend with staying power: "The baby boomers still are the biggest thing demographically," Long said.

As the one-third of the population born between 1946 and 1964 begins reaching its 50s, baby boomers will be making an even bigger splash as they get more leisure time and more money to spend.

They'll be leading the pack of consumers embracing so-called "vanity drugs" - concoctions to smooth wrinkles and and grow hair. They'll also lose the pin-stripes as they begin to dress down.

Among the younger crowd, laser removal of tattoos will become popular in '96. And twenty-somethings will drop grunge in favor of dressing up.

For now, Americans of all ages may have had their fill of drive-through food. Long predicts a re-

surgence of full-service restaurants, where patrons will treat themselves to big desserts - literally.

"Larger portions," Long said. "That is part of a trend toward self-indulgence."

Long stopped short of making too much of the dessert trend. It's been happening quietly for years, he said.

"Somewhere else in their diet they've pig out elsewhere in their diet," Long said. "Restaurants have outiced customers eating larger dessert portions and now they're making larger portions available."

But forget non-alcoholic beer. Erstwhile teetotalers are starting to backslide to the real thing, or switching to soft drinks. And while microbreweries will continue to boom, flavored coffees and carbonated water will fizzle, a result of market saturation.

Come vacation time, Long says more Americans will consider a trip to India in '96 as more US hotel franchises build there.

The trendiest pet in 1996? The flying squirrel, which already is a popular choice in England, Long said. And look for dog owners to train their canine companions for dog agility contests.

A lot of people always felt a little guilty about their dogs, who were bred to do something and got fat and lazy," he said. "Now people can brag about what their dog is capable of doing."

Long also foresees more in-store after '96.

"In the next five years, you are going to see bigger changes than in the last 10," Long said.

Pope in address: Adults owe youngsters a peaceful future

VATICAN CITY (AP) - Making young people the focus of his New Year's wishes, Pope John Paul II said yesterday that adults owe it to children to guarantee a future of peace in the next millennium.

In a tradition started by Pope Paul VI, the Roman Catholic Church celebrates January 1 as World Peace Day, and this pope decided to dedicate 1996 to children, especially those suffering from war or other violence.

"Every child, you can say, is a symbol of human history that begins all over, with tenacious hope," John Paul told tourists and pilgrims in St. Peter's Square who turned out for his New Year's blessing at noon.

"The children of the Earth, in this tiny part of the century, are the seeds of the third millennium. Let's not extinguish the hope in their heart; let's not smother their expectations for peace," the pope said.

He continued: "It's truly important that we adults think about ensuring that children have a future of peace. It's our task, our responsibility."

"By now we're taking big strides toward the historic crossing-line of 2000, an important step in the path of humanity," the pope said. "May the Lord allow us to reach it renewed in spirit and generous in creating a world that is more united and welcoming."

Ready or not, another US election year is here

DAVID S. BRODER
WASHINGTON

CAMPAIGN 1996 began yesterday, offering a politically divided nation the opportunity to set a path for itself into a new millennium.

The election poses unprecedented challenges to both parties as a restless electorate that rejected Republicans in 1992 and Democrats in 1994 casts a skeptical eye on the alternatives and beckons independent politicians to enter the fray.

Between now and November 5, several hundred million dollars will be spent in the battle for the White House, 33 Senate races and 435 House contests. But if early forecasts prove correct - a dubious proposition considering the history of such predictions - the political stalemate over the role of government and the best use of scarce fiscal resources may remain unbroken.

President Clinton, hiding to become the first Democratic president elected to two full terms since Franklin D. Roosevelt, is attempting something no other Democrat has accomplished.

Never before has an elected Democratic president seen the opposition capture both chambers of Congress in the midterm election, then come back to win a second term for himself. The closest parallel was Harry S. Truman, who overcame a midterm Republican landslide in his famous 1948 upset, but he had been the vice presidential candidate with FDR in 1944.

On the Republican side, Senate Majority Leader Robert J. Dole, Kan., holds commanding advantages over his eight rivals. He leads in fund-raising, endorsements and all the pre-primary polls. But Dole has failed in three previous tries for national office, and, if nominated, would face a precedent-breaking challenge of his own.

Never in American history has the electorate chosen a president who was a generation older than the incumbent. Dole is 23 years older than Clinton, the biggest such gap in the annals of the presidency.

Unprecedented also is the flight of incumbents from Congress, one of many factors clouding the prospects for the other half of the 1996 election. The dozen retirees from the Senate is the largest number since the direct election of senators began 80 years ago.

Along with another heavy wave of retirements in the House, it guarantees that the new Congress will include a large number of freshmen. If they are like the big first-year classes elected in 1992 and 1994, they may well add to the policy polarization that has made this one of

the most partisan eras this century.

With eight of the 15 Senate Democrats up for re-election this year choosing to retire, compared to only four of the 18 Republicans, Democrats have little prospect of picking up the four seats they would need (along with Vice President Al Gore's tie-breaking vote) to regain a Senate majority.

Democratic chances appear little brighter in the House, where retirements, particularly in the South, again jeopardize chances of a turnaround.

So far, 23 House Democrats have announced plans to retire or run for other office, while only 10 House Republicans are hailing out.

Both numbers likely will increase as state filing deadlines approach.

Democrats console themselves that the seats being vacated have stronger Democratic constituencies than those opened up by retirements in 1994. "This time, unlike last, the Republicans are holding more of our districts (those with historical patterns of Democratic voting) than we are holding of theirs," one Democratic strategist argued.

Nonetheless, Rep. Bill Paxon (NY), chairman of the National Republican Congressional Committee, has predicted GOP gains of 20 to 30 seats, which would reduce Democratic ranks to the lowest level since the Great Depression began in 1929.

Paxon based his optimism not just on an upsurge in campaign contributions since the 1994 breakthrough and "spectacular recruitment success" in lining up candidates for November, but also on the belief, as he put it, that "the country is conservative now, and as long as we are the conservative party, we'll do well."

That proposition remains to be tested. The 73 House GOP freshmen have won a reputation for stubborn adherence to the "Contract With America" promises they made in their first campaigns, but none has faced scrutiny as an incumbent.

In 1994 they were able to use the Clinton health-care plan as a convenient symbol of the Big Government they promised to battle.

This year, when their drive for a balanced budget ran up against such popular programs as Medicare and Medicaid, environmental cleanup and college loans, approval of

Congress took a dive. For now the budget dispute has boosted Clinton's standing and put the Republican resurgence in jeopardy.

It appeared that the GOP had solved the hardest part of the electoral puzzle in 1994 when it ended 40 years of partial or complete Democratic control of Congress.

Republicans had won the White House in five of the last seven elections, and doing it again - against a candidate who had captured only 43 percent of the vote in 1992 - seemed an insurmountable challenge.

But Clinton has proved to be indestructible. His approval ratings, which soared at the end of 1993 with victories on the North American Free Trade Agreement and other issues, then collapsed at the end of 1994 with the health care fiasco and the midterm election rout, are back at their peak with the end of 1995.

He has a double-digit lead over Dole in trial heat polls and simulations prepared for the White House indicate that if the election were held now, he might win more than the 370 electoral votes he received in 1992.

Election Day is more than 11 months away, but Clinton has the advantage of being the first Democratic president since FDR to escape a serious challenge for re-nomination.

Clinton will have almost \$40 million of private contributions and federal matching money to use between now and August, when he and his GOP opponent will receive another pair of government checks to pay for the run to November.

Two other distinctive features of 1996 pose a challenge to both parties. This will be the first national election conducted since the "motor voter" law made it far easier for people to become registered voters.

Already some eight million names have been added to the rolls in drivers-license bureaus, welfare and unemployment offices and other venues, a tempting target for Democrats if they can get these younger, poorer people to vote.

And the forebortened Republican-nomination contest - with 70 percent of the delegates to be chosen in a seven-week period from early February to late March - "means the general election will likely begin on March 27," the day after the California primary, deputy Clinton campaign manager Ann Lewis said.

The Washington Post

Tiger kills tipsy man in Calcutta

CALCUTTA, India (AP) - A tiger killed a tipsy young man and mauled his friend yesterday after they tried to put a marigold garland around its neck as a gesture of New Year's greeting, witnesses and Calcutta zoo officials said.

The victims, Suresh Rai and Prakesh Tiwari, both in their 20s, had gone to Calcutta to celebrate the New Year.

Both had a few drinks and were drunk when they decided to do something unique - garland one of the Royal Bengal tigers on New Year's Day.

Calcutta is close to the Sunderbans delta, the natural habitat of the endangered Royal Bengal Tiger.

The two men bought the garlands from vendors, and somehow crossed the horseshoe-shaped moat that separates the tigers' enclosure.

When Rai threw the garland around the neck of a 13-year-old male tiger - named 'Shiva', after the Hindu God of destruction - the tiger jumped and attacked him.

Seeing that the fun was about to turn into a tragedy, Rai's friend Tiwari intervened.

Tiwari kicked the tiger in its face, hoping that the boot would force the beast to release his friend.

The tiger did release Rai, but attacked Tiwari.

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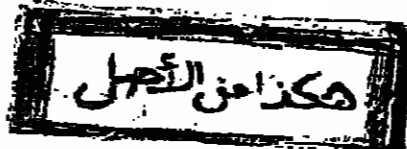
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Bosnians greet New Year with joyful gunfire

SARAJEVO (Reuters) - Bosnians greeted the New Year's fresh start of peace yesterday with a barrage of joy from guns used just weeks ago in a war which killed 200,000 people.

Sarajevo's midnight sky was lit up with machinegun tracer fire and flare bursts as citizens and armed groups welcomed 1996 in an atmosphere of celebration, not anger.

Tuzla, the north Bosnian town that is becoming headquarters of 20,000 US peacekeepers, echoed to automatic gunfire as young civilians leaned from their windows to fire into the air.

The Serbian stronghold of Banja Luka, the biggest town in Bosnian Serb-held territory, shook at midnight to a fusillade that any front line would have been proud of, residents said.

The shooting had been grudgingly anticipated by NATO, assembling a 60,000-strong force to police a hard-won peace accord and keep rival Muslim, Croat and Serbian armies apart.

A NATO spokesman, Major Tom Moyer, described the shooting as "undisciplined fire." Bosnian government police reported only one person wounded.

NATO's operation received a boost on Sunday when US engineers finally beat the weather and spanned the Sava river border between Croatia and Bosnia with a pontoon bridge.

But US military traffic over the troubled structure eased yesterday to avoid creating a New Year's Day traffic jam and the army said the structure needed repair after only 24 hours.

US NATO spokesman Major Tom Moyer said only about 50 vehicles, a third of Sunday's level, were expected to cross the bridge, which forms the border between Croatia and Bosnia.

"We don't have the command and control structure to get them moving out on the other [Bosnian] side," he said.

The army said a troublesome offshore island would have to be repaired with yet more gravel on top of the \$1 million worth used so far in the biggest operational bridge the US army has built since World War II.

Armored vehicles, Jeep-style Humvee trucks and 70-ton Abrams tanks drove south over the Sava on the pontoon bridge, completed on Sunday after a series of weather-related delays.

Altogether 148 vehicles and 436 troops crossed the swollen river on Sunday, the first day of an operation to move much of the US contingent to the Bosnian peace Implementation Force (IFOR) from rear bases in Germany.

Effectively a world army, IFOR is meant to cement - if necessary, enforce - a settlement grudgingly accepted by the warring combatants, of Europe's worst war to half a century.

Saudi King Fahd steps down for now

Crown prince takes over

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia (AP) - King Fahd temporarily handed over the reins of government yesterday to Crown Prince Abdullah and said he needed to rest, a reference to his continuing poor health.

The announcement by the Saudi monarch cast further doubts about his well-being, and was certain to cause jitters in oil markets when trading resumes today after the New Year's holiday.

A decree by Fahd, an overweight, diabetic in his early 70s, did not say how much time the king needed to recuperate and didn't give any details about the state of his health.

"Because we wish to spend some time resting and recuperating and because of your highness' good character... we entrust you in this decree to take over management of government affairs while we enjoy rest and recuperation," Fahd's decree said.

The official Saudi Press Agency quoted Abdullah as saying in a letter to the king that he would consult the monarch "whenever I find myself in need for your counsel and recommendations."

Prince Abdullah, who is also in his 70s, said nothing would make him happier than seeing King Fahd back at the helm.

The announcement was seen as an attempt to assure the world and international markets that Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest



Saudi Arabia's King Fahd (right) hands over the government to his brother, Crown Prince Abdullah, yesterday. The leader has been suffering from poor health following a stroke in November.

oil exporter, was out rudderless.

News of Abdullah taking temporary charge of the country was not likely to undermine Saudi Arabia's standing as one of the most stable Middle East countries despite pressure from Moslem fundamentalists advocating

stricter observation of Islamic laws and intellectuals pressing for political reforms.

Abdullah later yesterday chaired the weekly cabinet meeting as he has done since Fahd was admitted to a hospital November 30 suffering from what an official

statement said was a "temporary health emergency."

A team of US physicians was flown in to treat him, a fact that suggested his condition was more serious than officially disclosed. US sources in Washington said he suffered a stroke.

Fahd has a long history of health problems and has used a cane to walk in recent years.

He ascended the throne of this vast and wealthy country in 1982 when his brother Khaled died. He chose Abdullah as his heir apparent.

Gunmen kill two army captains in Karachi

KARACHI, Pakistan (Reuters) - Gunmen shot dead four soldiers, including two army captains, and a policeman and fired at a local train in the Pakistani city of Karachi yesterday, police and ambulance workers said.

Violence marred the New Year in the southern city with at least 18 people killed in separate incidents, the police said.

More than 1,950 people died in 1995 in ethnic, sectarian and political violence that has wracked Pakistan's commercial capital. In 1994, some 800 people were killed.

The government blames the ethnic Mohajir National Movement (MQM) for most of the violence, while the MQM accuses security forces of the bloodshed and blames the government for extra-judicial killings of its workers.

Yesterday, the bullet-riddled bodies of two army captains, one lower rank soldier and a policeman were found dumped in a van parked in an alley behind a shopping mall in the Liaquatnabad area, the police and hospital sources said.

No details were immediately available, but a police official, who asked not to be named, said two victims were army captains posted with paramilitary rangers.

One bullet-riddled body of a man found in eastern Malir district yesterday morning was identified as ranger Dost Mohammed. Police said the ranger was in plainclothes and was on intelligence-gathering duties in Malir's troubled locality of Saudabad.

Violence took a new turn on the New Year when gunmen fired at a local passenger train, wounding one passenger, police said.

Police also said gunmen barged into a house in the eastern industrial district of Korangi and opened fire on an old man and his five sons.

Doctors said the 65-year-old man and four sons, all in their late 20s, died immediately while one of the boys survived with several bullet wounds.

The gunmen also looted cash and jewelry from the house before escaping, police added.

Four more bodies of young men with gunshot wounds were found in district Central's Azizabad, Sharifabad and Chandni Chowk areas and four people were shot dead overnight, police said.

A police source, referring to the deaths, said a retired senior police officer was kidnapped by unknown gunmen from the southern district. His bullet-riddled body showing torture marks was later found in the same area.

A police inspector and a shopkeeper were killed while the inspector's son was wounded when unidentified gunmen opened fire on them in southern district's Risala area.

Witnesses said heavy gunfire, mainly from New Year revelers, was heard all over the city on Sunday night.

Major promises the fight of his life in New Year's message

LONDON (Reuters) - British Prime Minister John Major pledged the fight of his life in a resilient New Year's message yesterday but fresh sniping soon consumed the ruling Conservatives.

Major's resolution for 1996 came days after Conservative member of parliament Emma Nicholson delivered a cruel Christmas gift to the premier by defecting to the centrist Liberal Democrats, reducing Major's majority in parliament to just five.

The premier - who often delivers his best performances when down - hit out at Nicholson for her treachery and said voters could expect greater staying power from him.

"It is too easy to cut and run when hard decisions have to be made," Major wrote in the tabloid Sun.

"It is sad when people cannot see through commitments they have personally made to their electorate just a few years ago. But that will not deflect me from seeing through my commitments to the end. It is not enough to start a project. You have to have the determination to see it through, because all the rewards are in achieving your aims," Major said.

Major has said he will not be swayed into calling an early election - a vote is not due until May 1997 - but his majority of 21 has been whittled away to risky single figures by a string of by-election

defeats, deaths and two embarrassing defections.

Nicholson's move, which she blamed on a Conservative lurch to the right, provoked speculation Major may have to call an election this year, despite Labor's 30-point lead in the polls.

"The opposition can barely wait. The government is in chaos... Parliament has virtually ground to a halt," Labor leader Tony Blair wrote in the Sun.

"They insist they will go the full course of this parliament and that there will be no election until well into 1997," said Blair. "So, while they stagger on, we must be patient, disciplined and determined as we prepare for the election."

Iran withdraws Oscar entry over US plan

TEHRAN (Reuters) - Iran has withdrawn its film entry for an Oscar award to protest moves in the US Congress to fund covert action against the Iranian government, local newspapers said yesterday.

"Iran will not take part in the Oscar competitions... in protest against the recent US Congress allocation of budget to topple the Islamic Republic," Ezzatollah Zarghami, the top official in charge of films at the Islamic Culture and Guidance Ministry, was quoted by the daily Iran News.

The White Balloon, a double-award winner at the latest Cannes Film Festival, was submitted in October as Iran's entry in the foreign-language category of the Academy Awards.

"It would be most inappropriate to screen such an emotive and sentimental film full of love and affection in a nation which is ruled by [a] world arrogant power under totally inhuman conditions," Zarghami was quoted by the Iranian news agency IRNA.

Iran has condemned moves in the Congress to allocate up to \$20 million to fund a covert action program against Iran, branding it "state terrorism."

US hostages flown back to Manila

MANILA, Philippines (AP) - A weary group of Americans and their relatives stepped off a US government airplane in Manila yesterday after five days of captivity on a remote mountainside by suspected Moslem extremists.

US Embassy officials who monitored negotiations for the release of the Americans and then brought them back to Manila said they were too tired and shaken to speak to reporters, but had been treated well by their kidnappers.

"I think they came out of it well," said US Consul-General Kevin Herbert. "They're in good spirits and good health."

The four Americans hostages, all from California, were among 19 people kidnapped Wednesday by 20 heavily armed men from the Traang-Kine Spring Resort at remote Lake Sebu, 1,025 kilometers southeast of Manila.

Two of the Americans, along with four Filipinos, were released that day to relay the kidnappers' demand for a 1.5 million peso (\$57,700) ransom.

But the others were not released until Sunday, after the mayor of General Santos, a port city 50 kilometers to the east, pledged to provide new homes, a state-funded school and a cemetery for Moslems.

But she and other government officials insisted no ransom was paid, in line with a government policy aimed at discouraging more kidnappings in the area.

Police and military officials say the kidnappers are members of Abu Sayyaf, a militant Islamic group blamed for a string of kidnappings, robberies and armed attacks on the southern Philippine island of Mindanao.

Eleven people killed in Sri Lankan fighting

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP) - At least 11 people, including five soldiers, were killed as clashes between government troops and Tamil Tiger rebels continued into the New Year, a military official said yesterday.

Five rebels were killed yesterday morning during an attack on a police post in the western Puttalam district, said Major Tilak Dunuwille, a military spokesman. One policeman was also killed and four wounded in the attack.

Five soldiers were killed at dusk on Sunday when their vehicle was blown up by a guerrilla mine in the northern Jaffna Peninsula, he said. Five others were wounded in the incident at Kopai North, 300 km from Colombo.

Meanwhile, the Sri Lankan president in a New Year's message indicated that the military could soon leave Jaffna city, the rebel stronghold in the north that was captured after 50 days of fierce battle.

'Princess Diana resigned to divorce'

LONDON (AP) - Princess Diana is prepared to divorce Prince Charles as his mother has demanded - provided the terms are right, according to unidentified "friends" quoted in a newspaper yesterday.

The Daily Mirror said Diana has told friends she wants a clearly defined public role and a pledge "that I will always be treated as a princess and the mother of the future king."

Her elder son, Prince William, 13, is second in line to the throne after Charles.

Diana and Charles separated in 1992 after 11 years of marriage. Queen Elizabeth II wrote to them in December urging a quick divorce. Charles agreed but Diana is not known to have replied.

News reports have suggested for some time that Diana's future role was the sticking point.

In a television interview November 20, Diana blamed Charles' mistress, Camilla Parker Bowles, for the marriage breakdown. She also acknowledged an extramarital affair of her own and said she wanted to be a roving goodwill envoy for Britain.

Prime Minister John Major said Saturday that Diana must maintain a role in public life.

"It needs to be a dignified role and a worthwhile role and we will need to examine with the Princess of Wales precisely what that should be," he said in a BBC radio interview. He said details would be worked out among Diana, the royal family and the government.

The Daily Mirror said Diana has told friends and advisers in calls to London from the Caribbean, where she is vacationing, that she accepted that a divorce was inevitable.

The paper quoted one unidentified "friend" as saying: "She is quite determined that she will not be pushed into limbo as a sort of royal leper as was the Duchess of Windsor after the abdication of King Edward VIII. Nor is she prepared to go away quietly and live abroad."

While Diana was in the Caribbean, Charles and their two sons were headed to Klosters, Switzerland for a skiing holiday. Klosters is a favorite skiing area for Charles, despite a 1988 avalanche in which he narrowly escaped death and his friend Maj. Hugh Lindsay was killed.

Powerful quake hits Indonesia

JAKARTA, Indonesia (Reuters) - A powerful earthquake measuring 7.0 on the open-ended Richter scale shook Indonesia's Sulawesi island yesterday, destroying wooden houses and triggering tidal waves and aftershocks.

Officials said the extent of damage along a remote isthmus, 60 km at its widest, in central Sulawesi was unlikely to be known until today because of poor communications.

There were no immediate reports of loss of life.

The quake struck the large orchid-shaped island of Sulawesi, between Borneo and the Moluccas' spice islands, in the afternoon during the New Year's Day holiday.

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Integrate Ethiopian children

COALITION and opposition Koesset members seldom agree on anything. That 75 MKs from across the political spectrum - the number may reach 80 - have signed a petition calling on the government to improve the integration of Ethiopian children says something about the gravity and urgency of the problem.

The seeming indifference of the Education Ministry to what can only be termed a major failure in the absorption of school-age Ethiopians is nothing short of astounding. The current minister, Amnon Rubinstein (Meretz), is a far-sighted, innovative "activist" with a passion for making educational opportunities available to all. He is the last government official one would expect to ignore the educational system's mishandling of a whole group of immigrants.

There is no doubt that Ethiopian children are being persistently and systematically short-changed. A comprehensive report on the issue, published last summer by the Israel Association of Ethiopian Jews, testifies to the obtuseness, narrow-mindedness, and psychological abuse to which a whole generation of Ethiopian children is subjected. An investigative study by Ma'ariv, published last week, makes these findings seem understated.

As one Education Ministry official put it in the Ma'ariv report, "What happened here to the 1950s is nothing compared to what's happening with the Ethiopian community. This will cause heartache for generations."

The comparison can only make one shudder, for the scars of Israel's integration blunders four decades ago have yet to heal. And while the dreadful errors committed during the state's infancy can be rationalized by citing the immigration's overwhelming size and the country's poverty and inexperience, today's failure is as inexcusable as it is inexplicable.

The fundamental problem is "difficulty in communications," as Deputy Mayor Sa'adia Gozlan of Ofakim, where there is a large Ethiopian population, told Ma'ariv. And the cultural gap is exacerbated by bureaucratic irregularities. Ignoring the law which requires that only educational psychologists examine immigrant children to determine their placement in school, the system allows such determinations to be made by psychologists with no special training.

Unfortunately, most such psychologists are woefully unaware of the impact cultural differences can have on the child's responses. As Gozlan puts it, "The thinking of the Ethiopian

child is different, because he comes from a different culture. Who gives an answer according to the logic on which he was brought up, the psychologist interprets it as a deviation from the norm.

As a result of this callous and superficial testing procedure, a shocking number of Ethiopian children are placed in special education classes for children with severe learning disabilities. In a large number of cases, the classes function as little more than a baby-sitting service. The results can be devastating. As Dr. Gadi Beo-Ezer, in charge of Ethiopian affairs in the Education Ministry, put it, "The life of every child who unnecessarily enters such a framework is destroyed."

Incredibly, one of the reasons the system hastens to place Ethiopian children in classes for the handicapped is crudely cynical: the special education bureaucrats hope that they can get larger budgets if they crowd these classes. That the price of such manipulations is the destruction of young lives seems an irrelevant detail.

Nor are improper special education placements the only crime against the Ethiopians. As the director of the Israel Association for Ethiopian Jews Micba Odenheimer has pointed out, the majority of Ethiopian children are "indiscriminately tracked into low-level, no-future vocational schools." This, despite the fact that, as Odenheimer has written in The Jerusalem Post, "Privately funded programs have proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that Ethiopian students who are given intensive help for a year or two are able to overcome the educational gaps caused by the travails of immigration and go on to realize their naturally high potential."

What the signatories to the Knesset petition are asking for is no more than the implementation of the recommendations made by the Education Ministry's own steering committee on Ethiopian children. The committee recommended that NIS 50 million be earmarked to help their integration, while the ministry approved only NIS 15m., and only one tenth of the recommended amount, the sum of NIS 5m., has actually been allotted for this purpose.

The signers of the petition include Speaker deputies and heads of committees. It can only be hoped that both Rubinstein and Prime Minister Shimon Peres, to whom the petition is addressed, will heed the request of two thirds of the Knesset. It undoubtedly represents the wishes of the vast majority of the population.



Two versions of peace

DEPUTY Defense Minister Ori Orr, Chief of General Staff Amnon Shahak, his predecessor Ehud Barak, and all the generals of the Third Way agree: The Golan is vital to Israel, and irreplaceable in time of war. Yitzhak Rabin thought so too.

This was also the conclusion drawn after studies done by representatives of the US army; and members of the Russian General Staff who visited the Golan in 1992 concurred.

General Kelly (chief of operations of the combined general chiefs of staff during the Gulf war, in other words, General Schwarzkopf's boss) was much more outspoken. "You'd have to be crazy to withdraw from the Golan," he told me at the Israel Embassy in Washington a few years ago.

What a consensus for these troubled times.

Nevertheless, Orr has explained, and the peace treaty camp seems to agree, that if there really is peace and "we mingle with them, and they with us," the Golan, however critical and irreplaceable, won't be all that essential. This is no condition that, embassies and tourism apart, we retain some really secure footholds: the line of volcanic hills stretching from Mt. Hermon southward, down almost to the merging of the Rokad and Yarmuk rivers.

But this is the point at issue. Some people claim that the situation, as defined by Orr, is the same as prevails between Iraq and Kuwait, or Iraq and Iran, or between the republics of the former Soviet Union, or between Germany and France in their last three wars - or,

YOASH TSIDDON-CHATTO

an example topographically and demographically identical, between Germany and Czechoslovakia in 1938.

APART FROM the wars between Israel and the Arab states (which are really a single, interrupted war), history records practically no case of any war which did not erupt from a state of peace.

And peace, as one can discover from any decent dictionary, has two completely separate definitions. It is "a condition of harmony between groups or peoples," or "a

We are playing Syrian roulette

condition of freedom from war." The first definition, as in the case of the US and Canada, can only exist when there is no aggressive intention, when there are common interests, and no significant political, cultural, economic, religious or other differences.

The second definition, as in the case of the US and the former USSR, exists when there is aggressive intention, and there is a conflict of interests and significant political, cultural, economic, or religious differences. In such a situation, which is naturally unstable, there is a state of "freedom from war" or "cold war," resulting from deterrence.

Deterrence is the ability to prevent war by developing the strength needed to win a war, and the will to employ it when necessary.

and, by delivering the appropriate message to the other side.

As any one who has been through an NCO's course knows, territory is one of the three essential elements of strength. Handing over essential territory (irreplaceable, according to Shahak) to another country is not customary, but need not be dangerous in the case of a "harmonious" peace.

However, handing over such territory in a state of peace which is merely "freedom from war" significantly reduces deterrence. It increases the chance of war.

The followers of Peace Now can say what they like, but unless they sincerely believe that the Syrians - and that means Assad's successors too - will become Dutch or Canadian the day after the peace treaty is signed, they are pulling the wool over our eyes, and abandoning our security.

And as for the value of American guarantees, demilitarization and UN supervision, we found out what those were worth on the eve of the Six Day War. It is hard for me to believe that the Syrians will become Dutch the day after they gain possession of the Golan, and so I believe that what we are doing is playing Syrian roulette.

What's the difference between Russian and Syrian roulette? It's that in the Syrian version, the chamber of the revolver is nearly full.

The writer, a colonel in the Air Force reserves and a former MK, was a member of the first peace mission to Madrid.

Matter of life

GARY SHOWALTER

THE primary responsibility for the security of your home and family is yours. It does not devolve upon the state, the police, or the army.

Gush Etzion, like most of the rest of the country, has seen a marked increase in car thefts and break-ins during the last year. Even the Beit Shemesh area, within the Green Line, suffers. One of the moshavim near Beit Guvrin recently had its security fence stolen. This would be funny, if it weren't so ominous.

Surely one can say that things will improve once the Palestinian Authority controls the fields surrounding our communities. And is anyone willing to believe that joint patrols on the roads will improve our security?

It's hard to believe that people are willing to stake their lives on such an assumption, that no one has been listening to the news during the last few years.

How is it that with all that is happening around us, no one in Gush Etzion has had the foresight to make even the slightest improvements in the security of our communities?

Those who live in Gush Etzion should remember: It's better to be safe than sorry

I spent three years in the bush in Central America as a combat infantry officer, a member of a recon unit tracking down communist insurgents and busting up their training camps. I have experience with camp security, and I can say that no Jewish community in Gush Etzion is prepared for what is coming.

You say that your community has a security committee to deal with such things? You have patrols driving around at night, and even during the day?

Well, neighbor, your committee won't be at your place when the bad guys strike. Trust me on this: the cavalry is never around when you need it. The bad guys plan it that way. They aren't stupid.

YOUR HOME must be a secure place of refuge for your family. Speed some money on security bars for all your windows. Buy steel exterior doors. Select an inside room, perhaps the master bedroom, and turn it into a "safe room," complete with telephone, emergency light, a weapon, an alarm of some sort that can be easily heard outside, and a good steel door that won't be easy to get through. Train your family to head for that room during an emergency.

Install floodlights around your home and use them at night, whatever your neighbors say about lights bothering them. Those lights, barred windows and steel doors will discourage the bad guys from hitting your place.

Trim the shrubbery around your home. Don't provide thieves and terrorists with a hiding place. Make it easy for the security guys to check around your property. Don't sacrifice your security for the sake of a few trees and bushes. Be practical. Be realistic. Be prudent - and stay alive.

There are several communities in Gush Etzion which refuse to put up fences on principle. Well, if they want to stand on principle while the bad guys rob them blind and murder their families and friends in their sleep (remember Ma'ale Michmas? that's their business, I guess).

Border fences and perimeter fences have to be backed up with lighting, jeep patrols, foot patrols, and a determination to use force if necessary to underline the message: "Keep Out." That moshav near Beit Guvrin failed to understand this.

Fences, patrol roads, and security lights slow the bad guys down. Good lighting around homes, bars and steel doors slow them down or discourage them outright. That buys you time to react to an incursion, the chance to get your loved ones to safety.

If you were intent on stealing cars or making a terror strike, would you go up against a community equipped with good security measures, or would you strike somewhere that had no fence, poor security lighting, lots of trees and bushes to give you cover, and a complacent, unprepared populace?

The writer has lived in Gush Etzion for 11 years.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

DISCREDITING CAMPAIGN

Sir, - There is growing evidence that Israel's General Security Service (GSS) was behind a campaign to discredit the national camp. The GSS answers directly to the prime minister. If this was not a rogue operation, prime minister Yitzhak Rabin either ordered the campaign or let it continue when he found out about it. Rabin was known as a "details man." The suggestion that the GSS could run a dirty tricks campaign behind his back is an insult to his memory.

Many hope that the Shamgar Commission inquiry will help reveal the truth. There has, in fact, been testimony on this matter. Israel Television reporter Nitzan Chen testified about GSS agent Avishai Raviv's involvement in the distribution of the infamous "Rabin in SS uniform" handbill. Others described Raviv's role as agent provocateur, creating a series of media events which defamed the national camp. Raviv's GSS bosses went so far as to testify that they had assigned Raviv to check out Yigal Amir for the agency.

But so far indications from the Shamgar Commission are that it will not address the government conspiracy to defame its opponents. The warning letters issued by the Commission have been careful to limit the scope of the charges to activity directly related to the murder itself.

This is not what the Israeli public wants. A Gallup poll on behalf of IMRA (Independent Media Review and Analysis) on November 28 found that Jewish Israelis support expanding the mandate of the Commission to include an investigation of the dirty tricks by more than 5 to 2 (58.2% vs. 22.3%). Support crossed party lines, with those planning to vote Labor favoring the investigation 58.0% to 29.0% against.

This is not just a question of setting the record straight. There could be no greater crime against the democratic process than for the opponents of the current "peace process" to be defeated not by the merits of the government's arguments but by the government's manipulation of public opinion via the GSS.

Years after the Agranat Commission declined to find against Golda Meir's government for the Yom Kippur War fiasco, Justice Shimon Agranat explained that he did this to save the country from being stripped of its leadership. One can only hope that Justice Meir Shamgar has more confidence in the resiliency of the system. For if those who abuse their authority to undermine their political opponents can do so with impunity, the days of Israeli democracy are numbered.

DR. AARON LERNER Kfar Sava.

OVERSEAS BROADCASTS

Sir, - For years, with limited budget and enormous talent, the foreign language staff of Kol Yisrael's international service has provided timely and accurate reports of life in Israel. Personally, I have had the bitter-sweet experience of hearing its Yiddish broadcast in Vilna. In Morocco, Kol Yisrael was my traveling group's only source of information about the massacre in Hebron.

Despite Yossi Beilin's comment about Israel's prosperity, the budget for Kol Yisrael's foreign service has been gutted, reducing English-language broadcasts to just two a day. Transmission power of the 7 a.m. (Israel time) broadcast has been slashed from 300 to 50 kilowatts and is drowned out here by a US Catholic station.

As David Bar-Ilano has so ably reported, press prejudice against Israel is still significant. Is there no one in Israel's government who realizes the hasbara value of Kol Yisrael and will restore or even increase its voice in the world of international media? HENRY GERBER New York.

THE AMIR FAMILY

Sir, - Directly after the assassination of prime minister Rabin, I think that most of the public felt some kind of sympathy for the Amir family because one of their sons turned out to be a killer.

Next, we found out that Yigal's brother was in on the planning, produced the fatal dum-dum bullets, and that both of the brothers had hidden explosives, weapons, etc. in the family house and on the grounds around the house.

Now, we're treated to an interview on British television in which their sister defends Yigal and says he was the only one who "had the guts" to shoot the prime minister. Further, a report was broadcast on Israel Radio concerning a letter that Hagai Amir wrote to his parents urging them to express their "true feelings" on the matter.

I think that this family should be thoroughly investigated, and that if it turns out that the sister and/or the parents themselves are implicated in the conspiracy, they should be treated like any other family of terrorists and see their house destroyed. JOEL BLOCH Haifa.

Negev: Israel's 'backyard'

DAVID NEWMAN

LAST week's strike in Ofakim focused our attention on the economic plight of many development towns, especially those located in the periphery, in the Negev and in Galilee. Ben-Gurion's dream of developing the Negev remains as unfulfilled in the 1990s as it was 40 years ago.

Sixty percent of the country's limited land area contains no more than 10 percent of the population, while the metropolitan center of the country continues to undergo further expansion at the expense of the rapidly disappearing open and green areas.

Even the Gulf war with its Scuds left little impact on the country's population distribution. The exodus of Tel Aviv's inhabitants during the war was quickly forgotten. Any thoughts of exploiting the war's aftermath to persuade Israel's citizens to move out of the center have had little practical effect.

There was a limited population redistribution as a result of the Russian immigration. Left to centralized government planning, many immigrants were directed to the development towns of the Negev and Galilee, and new neighborhoods were constructed to meet the housing demand. But five years on, the lack of employment opportunities has only raised unemployment levels in these towns.

Many of the immigrants, having found their feet in their new society, have already opted to move on to their next, more permanent, homes in the metropolitan center of the country.

The perception of the Negev as Israel's backyard has grown sharply in recent years. The availability of open space has made the Negev a target area for solving many of Israel's environmental problems. The Negev is a location to which

it has somehow become acceptable to redistribute ills from the populated center. Take the government's decision to transform the Dudaim site into Israel's main garbage dump.

Aside from the potentially deleterious environmental effects, turning Dudaim into the national garbage center would seriously curtail the future physical expansion of Beersheba. Appeals

Why is it acceptable to transfer ills from the populated center of the country to the periphery?

against the national transfer of garbage to Dudaim have been lodged in both the National Planning Commission and in the courts, while Finance Minister Avraham Shochat promised to study the more remote option at Oran.

And what about the decision to establish a new customs-free industrial zone north of Beersheba, located between the two suburban communities of Oran and Meitar? The proposed Likit site has been justified on the grounds that it will offer new employment opportunities to the region. But the laws governing the establishment and operation of the zone take it out of the hands of the normal government regulatory procedures, virtually turning it into an extra-territorial enclave free of all normal Israeli laws.

The Negev Center for Regional Development, a research and policy oriented center at the Department of Geography at Ben Gurion University has come out strongly against the establishment of the

Likit industrial zone. The center's staff argue that the project will contribute significantly to traffic congestion and to air and water pollution for local residents. The rash claims that the project will result in the creation of 20,000 new jobs has not been supported by any hard evidence.

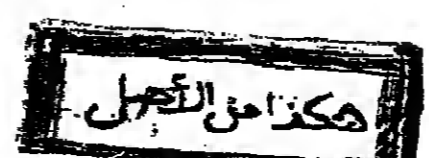
The government has attempted to portray opposition to the scheme as a middle-class NIMBY (not in my backyard) reaction from the residents of Oran and Meitar, at the expense of the unemployed residents of Beersheba and the surrounding development towns.

Perhaps the best example of the disdain felt for the Negev by Israel's senior policy makers is the decision to incarcerate assassin Yigal Amir in an isolated cell in the high security prison on the outskirts of Beersheba. During his trial, it is planned to transport him daily from the Negev to Tel Aviv and back.

Most of us in the Negev could well do without this contribution to our population increase. Of course, it won't affect our lives or be noticed in the way that the garbage dumps and the polluting factories are. But it does seem symptomatic of the way the Negev is perceived among the rest of the population.

Many of us are prepared to live without the massive population redistribution Ben-Gurion dreamed of. If most of the country's population prefers to reside within an over-populated and crowded metropolitan center, that's fine by us. But please, let them keep their garbage and pollution to themselves.

The writer teaches in the Department of Geography and Environmental Development and is director of the Humphrey Center for Social Policy at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev.



A legend hacks through show-biz hell

KRIS Kristofferson has another album out. It's really good, but like much of his work over the past 20 years, it largely is being ignored. The classic songwriter and actor is used to such slights, though he still hopes for a critical reevaluation during his lifetime.

Even with hot producer Don Was aboard, *A Moment of Forever* sat in the vaults for two years. No record company would put it out until Texas-based Justice Records, which released two recent albums by Kristofferson's pal Willie Nelson, issued it last summer.

Dog-tired and peeved at a performance of his own "Help Me Make It Through the Night," Kristofferson took 20 minutes backstage at a TV show to reflect on the journey "hacking" our way through showbiz hell.

Now 59, he was clad in black jeans and a T-shirt, a uniform he

sheds only when dressed for an acting role.

"Every record I've put out after *Jesus Was a Capricorn* (1972) was immediate obscurity," Kristofferson said. "You know, just disappeared without a trace and never promoted."

"I can remember one of the few people who reviewed *Third World Warrior* (1990) said, 'Surely he knows pigs will fly before somebody will play this on the radio.' It was in *USA Today*. And I, in my naive daze said, 'Well, ... I didn't know that. I thought they [the songs] were pretty good.'"

Unlike his most beloved material - "For the Good Times," "Me and Bobby McGee," "Sun-

day Morning Coming Down" - much of Kristofferson's work in the past 10 years has been overtly political.

Third World Warrior focused on Central America and was particularly critical of what US policy had wrought there.

"I remember a woman coming up to me one time and complaining about one of the songs ... that began with killing babies in the name of freedom," Kristofferson said. "And I said, 'Well, what made you mad - the fact that I was saying it or the fact that we're doing it?' To me, they were getting mad at me 'cause I was telling them what was going on."

A Moment of Forever is billed

as a return to love songs for Kristofferson, and there are a couple that stand up to his formidable canon: the title song and "The Promise," written for his eight children.

There's also biting social criticism and poetry forced out of Kristofferson's emotional croak of a voice.

Think Bob Dylan without the pop-culture baggage, though as the star of Hollywood spectacles like *A Star Is Born*, he has had his own distractions.

BORN IN Brownsville, Texas, in 1936, Kristofferson is the scion of a military family (his father was a general and both his grandfathers were officers). He was a Rhodes Scholar and began writing songs as a sideline to his ambitions as a novelist.

He followed the family tradition and enlisted in the US Army, becoming a helicopter pilot in Germany. After getting out in 1965, he headed to Nashville, underemploying himself by taking a job as the janitor at Columbia Records.

His big break came when Roger Miller recorded "Me and Bobby McGee," leading to a passel of lucrative placements with artists like Johnny Cash and Janis Joplin.

His marriage to singer Rita Coolidge kept him in the news as his record sales started to falter. Eventually, his career in Hollywood began to overshadow the music. Among his roles were parts in *Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore*, *Convoy*, *Roller* opposite Jane Fonda and the remake of *A Star Is Born* with Barbara Streisand. Most recently he played Abraham Lincoln in a movie for cable television.

He said that Hollywood may have saved his music career; through his acting he at least got some exposure. But in recent years, his emphasis has been on the harder road - touring clubs to promote music most fans are un-

familiar with.

Unable to afford a full band, Kristofferson leaves his Hawaii home periodically to tour clubs with just one other player - the versatile Daouy Timms, who cowrote a couple of songs on *A Moment of Forever*. Kristofferson also gets the occasional acting job and records and tours with his buddies as the Highwaymen - Willie Nelson, Waylon Jennings and Johnny Cash.

"I think the world's been very kind to me," Kristofferson said, despite the lack of acceptance of his later music. "I have not worked a lick since 1969 ... and I've been able to do things beyond my wildest dreams."

"I'm working with my heroes, with Johnny Cash and Willie and Waylon. Just to have met them would have been an incredible thing, but to be their friend and their peer is wonderful." (AP)

Rocker should look homeward

NEW RELEASES
TIRZAH AGASSI

JEFF Shapiro is an Israeli-boro rock musician who thinks that there are plenty of good musicians in Israel "but they're in the wrong place."

The 28-year-old Shapiro, who was here with his band *Tevevo* last week, lives in London where rock music "is made first band," cooked up in a crucible which, unlike the local scene, has the leisure to put music first, to eat, drink and think it, to forget headlines and history, aiming instead at soothing but bringing forth new sounds.

Tevevo's first album *Electric Earth* (Magic Zebra) has just been released locally by Brand New Entertainment Ltd. It's a promising debut which, oddly enough - given Shapiro's insistence that London is the place to be - sounds best when the music is given a Middle Eastern twist by veteran Lebanese violinist Abnd Abdel Al.

The first single is called "So Good." Singer/guitarist Shapiro insists that the lyrics - "I feel so good when I'm inside ... you" - describe his emotions while riding in a double-decker bus. However, everything about the song suggests a rather more intimate ride.

The vocal, which starts with a sly grunt that sounds like it's slurped into your ear, is believable in its passionate serenade. And the ensemble is tight as it plays in a manner that Shapiro describes as "melodic, not pun-

ky, but still anxious enough to have an edge."

Yet, it is the solo of their 65-year-old Levantine violinist that gives it special depth.

Shapiro and his partner, bassist Philip Deacon, who played together in a former band called Blue Room Orchestra, have surrounded themselves with musicians who boast such enviable credits as recording with Brian Eno (Barry Andrews on keyboards) and Thomas Dolby (Kat Evans on violin.) The mix of rock and strings that they come up with is both up to date and a touch different. But is it different enough?

Electric Earth is being played on American alternative and college radio and Shapiro says that it is heard often on British radio. But when, in a telephone interview, he asked if it has made the British Indie charts he avoids the question.

Rock music is always a gamble. The most awful material often sells millions while genius rots in the gutter. Still and all there are fine groups, like Massive Attack for example, who do hit the jackpot. Shapiro, who sounds quite savvy about the business end of things, would clearly like *Tevevo* (named in honor of the number's legendary power and luck) to be a band of the jackpot-hitting variety.

What is it that would make the band, that already seems to have a healthy momentum, forge a truly distinctive sound? Shapiro's lyrics are often good. Whether



Despite Jeff Shapiro's insistence that London is the place to be, the Israeli's music sounds best when given an oriental twist.

fretting about danger from the fast changes in Eastern Europe or merely about his own wrestling with faith, he is refreshingly honest. But the inclusion of a cover of Lemmo and McCartney's "A Day In The Life" shows how much more free and vivid he could be.

He could also probably mine his Israeli roots more thoroughly. On a song called "No Shame" he sings of his parents being from Russia and Africa (his mother,

who raised him speaking English, is originally from Zimbabwe) and lists various religious and national identities out to feel ashamed of: "Something about this 'bits home, especially when he sings of the identities of Israeli, Palestinian and Jew (rhymes with Sioux)."

Surely he could take this tack even further. He does have the courage of a genuine artist. Now it's a matter of really sinking his teeth into the material that life has given him.

Shapiro's scorn for local rock, which copies the sound of what's happening in Europe and America, adding lyrics "in a language nobody understands," has its point. But perhaps he's making the same mistake as the locals when he worships the West as being the center of the universe.

His introduction to Middle Eastern violin was a twist of fate that came about when he was asked to produce an album of Abud Abdel Al's. Yet every re-

viewer has noticed the special touch that the violin adds to the songs on which he plays.

Perhaps if Shapiro chose to open his ears to other Levantine tones, which quite a few local musicians are indeed experimenting with, he could come up with a musical blend that integrates the cutting edge of Loodoo with the bum of his own back yard. And who knows, perhaps that would give him the sound with which to conquer the world.

Bat-Dor's waltz gets a bit wild

DANCE REVIEW
DORA SOWDEN

DOMY Reiter-Soffer, the internationally known Israeli choreographer, came back home with his beautiful work *La Valse*, with music by Ravel, to orchestrate its performance by the Bat Dor Dance Company. The December 30 performance at the Mann Auditorium was even more memorable than it had been when originally staged - fresher, stronger, brighter. Profits from the evening went to the Libi fund for soldiers.

This is an ordinary three-quarter-time invention and Reiter-Soffer, who has created many outstanding works for the Bat Dor company over the past quarter century, has never done anything more impulsive and stylish than this wild, exciting fantasy of the spirit of dance. The Bat Dor company has ever looked more polished and patrician - the women in flame-red costumes with plumed dresses, the men in sober shirts, waistcoats and black trousers. The elegance as the dancers swept across the stage was nothing less than splendid.

Central to the success was guest dancer Jay Brooker, who had earlier appeared as a soloist in another work by Reiter-Soffer called *Ranaan* ("Renewal") with trumpeter Ram Oren and three other musicians who backed his pliant eloquence and technical brilliance.

IN THIS season of Nutcrackering the world over, it is good to be able to say that the current production here by the Israel Ballet must surely be among the best. The choreography by Berta Yampolsky is based on the traditional one by Petipa-Ivanov, and the Tchaikovsky music and the staging were charming.

Yampolsky has let her imagination fly and used every available resource of her company of 30 dancers plus, for the party in Act I, dozens of children from her own and other studios.

The fight between the mice and the toy soldiers was not very clear, but once Clara, the birthday girl, threw her shoe and the king-rat died and the prince was liberated, a good time was had by all. As the prince took Clara (crowned with a tiara) to the Land of Snow on a coach of shells, the snowflakes danced.

In the Land of Sweets, the dancing got faster and freer with a trio of Tea China, a quartet of Chocolate Coffee, three Russians doing a trepak, three Arabian hours and their guard, and more and more.

The Sugarplum Fairy was lovely, though lacking the lyrical touch that the celestial music suggested. Still, the pas de deux of the fairy with her cavalier was excellent.

Dr. Drosselmeyer, the present giver, far from being "frightful" as the program indicated, was so avuncular that he mended the outcracker doll.

Vengerov vaults to top of violin ranks; Liturgica branches out

CONCERT ROUNDUP

TWENTY-ONE-year-old Maxim Vengerov displayed a stunning combination of technical wizardry and empathy in his performance with the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra of Shostakovich's Violin Concerto No. 1. The performance was a shattering testimony to Shostakovich's tragic dilemma: adjusting his music to official dictates or expressing his inner truth and locking the score in the drawer. In this concerto, which wasn't performed until after Stalin's death, Shostakovich chose the second option.

The first movement is a long, dirge-like, elegiac melody; the second is comprised of wild, apocalyptic outbursts. In the third movement, he returns to a heart-breaking monologue, which is followed by a painfully twisted hassidic dance to the final movement.

Vengerov's interpretation was powerfully convincing, even breathtaking.

Conductor Antonio Pappano brought out all the details of the score, while allowing Vengerov immense freedom to let go.

In the second part, by conducting Ravel's complete *Choreographic Symphony in Three Parts - Daphnis and Chloe*, as he did, Pappano provided magnificent sonority and a delicate sensuality. Yuval Ben-Ozer's newly established Philharmonic Singers acquitted themselves with flying colors.

One reservation: the concert was much too long, not ending until 11 p.m. So why was it necessary to start with a miserable performance of Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 3?

Mann Auditorium, Tel Aviv, December 28.
Benjamin Bar-Au

AN INNOVATION in this year's Liturgica series is the inclusion of Jewish religious music highlighting Near-Eastern traditions. A particularly attractive program featured Moroccan Invocation Prayer-songs, or *bagashot*, presented in their authentic performance style.

This highly refined art of vocal improvisation in a prescribed mode on a given prayer text requires much ingenuity from the singer, expressed by the inventiveness of his improvisation, the richness of his embellishments and ornamentations, and his voice quality.

By these standards, the performance of chief singer Emil Zilhen, seconded by Yosef Elimlech, admirably represented this ancient tradition in its pure form.

The Oriental Instrumental Ensemble of Yosef Shirki, with authentic instruments played in the traditional manner, contributed a delicate texture of interlacing and alternating with the singing.

Particularly fascinating was a boys' choir from Ashkelon Waldenberg Community Center, directed by Rabbi Meir Atiah,

which rendered these songs with enthusiasm coupled with respect.

An attempt at Westernizing some of these songs was as laborious as it was misplaced and superfluous.

Although the Cantus Choir, conducted by Eli Jaffe, sounded carefully rehearsed and conscientious, the Western-style singing stripped the tunes of their most characteristic qualities - ornamentation and monophony.

Jerusalem Theater, December 25.
Ury Eppstein

ASHKENAZIC cantorial music, in the Liturgica series, was presented by cantors Naftali Hershik, Ya'acov Motzoe and Benjamin Miller.

Their glorious voices, superb command of this extremely specialized vocal style, and intense expression of the prayers' spirit and significance, make them rank among the particularly distinguished representatives of this genre.

Their repertoire includes pieces by celebrated cantors of earlier generations, such as Yosele Roscoblatt, Zvulun Kvarin and Moshe Kussevitzky. Strictly defined in terms of modes, melodic patterns and melisms, the singing conveys imploration, faith, fear and weeping, but also joy and hope, often with a very personal, emotional touch and is

therefore profoundly moving at times.

Jerusalem Theater, December 26.
Ury Eppstein

UNDER the heading "Sing unto the Lord a new song," the Liturgica concert series presented predominantly vocal music from the Baroque, on Biblical texts, performed by Keabet Habaroque soloists directed by David Shemer.

Schutz's Four Psalms featured changing vocal combinations, from solo aria to quintet, while Francois Cooperin, some 80 years later, already added alternating instrumental solo passages for the sake of increased variety, in his *Seven Verses from Psalm 80*. One of the earliest oratorios, Carissimi's *Historia di Baluzar*, proceeded in a still mainly recitative style.

One particular charm of this program was its presencing young, hopeful singers. Especially appealing was Yishai Steckler who displayed a pleasant-sounding, flexible tenor and remarkably well-cultivated singing.

Welcome as the opportunity of hearing young artists is, the careful selection of less demanding works that are more suitable for their capacities would render them a better service.

With Kuhnau's Biblical Sonata No. 2, "Calming Saul's Troubled Mind," harpsichordist David Shemer provided instrumental

solo color to the program.

St. Andrew's Scottish Church, Jerusalem, December 23.
Ury Eppstein

TELEMANN'S concluding cantata *I searched at night*, in the mostly-cantatas program of the "Accademia Daniel," directed by Shalev Ad-El, in the Liturgica series, at last achieved the performance level that one had hoped for from the start.

The singers, Guy de Mey and Klaus Mertens, gave an outstanding performance. De Mey's tenor, though rich in shadings from the forcefully heroic to the softly lyric to the chronically narrative and displaying a formidable command of style, could not quite let one forget how murderously difficult the coloraturas are in Bruhn's *Rejoice the Lord*.

Mertens's pleasant bass sounded most enjoyable in Bach's *Ich habe genug* when the instruments had a pause. Instead of supporting the solo voice, they mostly drowned it due to lack of sound-balance - a sign of unprofessional direction. Violist Amos Boassou and oboist Ofer Frenkel's obbligatos were faithful to style but

too assertive.

Each instrument - violinists Kati Debrezani and Dafna Ravid, gambist Nina Ben-David, harpsichordist Ad-El - sounded reasonably polished in Bach's Trio Sonata in C major, but each sounded as if she were playing for herself, without a guiding hand to lead them together.

Jerusalem Theater, December 30.
Ury Eppstein

UNDER the direction of the British conductor Nicholas McGegan, the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, the Vilnius Choir Jauna Muzika and soloists gave an inspired performance of Handel's *Judas Maccabaeus* as part of the Liturgica series. His swift, lively tempi set a forward-driving pace right from the start, leaving no trace of the conventional pompous, heavy and tiring Baroque style of bygone days. The large choir produced enormous masses of sound, well-balanced, homogeneous and spirited.

Jerusalem Theater, December 27.
Ury Eppstein

Drought, what drought? It's still raining on-stage

UNCLE VANYA
By Anton Chekhov. Hebrew, David Avidan. Direction, Oded Kotler. Design, John Bogart. Music, Leonid Volkov. Hebrew title, *Hadod Vanya*. At Haifa Municipal Theater.

Uncle Vanya Moshe Ivgy
Dr. Astorov Oded Kotler
Sonia Orly Silbershitz-Bassal
Yelena Yael Elor Gil
The Professor Shimeon Yisraeli

DESPITE its genuine Chekhov charm and flavor, *Uncle Vanya* is a play fraught with problems. Not only interminably long, it also poses the problem of cross-cultural adaptation.

Played without the right dose of Slav sentiment and sensibility - unmarred by Western

sentimentality - it stands to be diminished, if not defused. It also invites danger when direction bends over backwards to attempt an innovative approach. The result is often unauthentic and dreary.

Haifa's version, caught in both traps, falls somewhere in between. It takes plenty of hubris plus some talent to direct and at the same time play one of the leading parts. Oded Kotler, with his unfocused, would-be novel approach to direction, and his nonchalant, nondescript Astorov, displays more of the first than the second.

(For the third time this season running water steals the show. This time round - desperately driving rain.) He sets a decrepit domestic interior against a crumbling rustic exterior.

The result is depressing.

Nor does it add much to the sense of dark drama thrashing behind the surface of Chekhov's time-trapped Russian country gentry. In fact, the only recognizable echo of old Russia emanates from lesser roles like Orly Silbershitz-Bassal's quirky, spinsterish Sonia, Mordehai Ben-Zeev's touching Talyegin and Rosa Rosenbaum's Marina.

Ivgy, with his striking stage presence, opts for sour, saturnine irony instead of the mawkish modesty that usually colors the role.

As Serbtreyakov, Shimeon Yisraeli offers an endearing persona, which fails to measure up to the pompous professor whose destructive dynamic that should drive the play.

Naomi Doukai

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BUSINESS & FINANCE

TUESDAY, JANUARY 2, 1996

Oron: 18% of Histadrut staff should be fired

JENNIFER FRIEDLIN

THE Histadrut should cut its workforce by 18 percent, Histadrut Treasurer Haim Oron said yesterday during a meeting of the Histadrut's directors.

Such a reduction would mean the firing of 300 workers.

Meanwhile, Histadrut Chairman Amir Peretz announced a hiring freeze in the Histadrut and said new employees will be taken on only with Peretz's approval.

"Heads of the Histadrut's branches will have to make due with fewer employees," Peretz said. "Veteran employees will re-

ceive additional assignments, and we will not hire new workers."

The directors also announced a 13% reduction in the 1996 budget to NIS 379.5 million from last year's budget of NIS 439.9m.

Although the theme of the meeting was budgetary tightening, several of the directors made special requests for perks from companies that are affiliated with the Histadrut.

Two of the directors also attacked the size of the allocation to Na'amat, the women's branch of the Histadrut.

Peres: Firings at Rafael to go ahead as planned

On Laviv and Jerusalem Post Staff

RAFAEL, the state-owned arms development authority, will continue to implement the rationalization program that includes firing some 350 employees, Prime Minister and Defense Minister Shimon Peres decided yesterday.

Company employees said they were "astonished" by Peres's decision, since they expected him to reconsider the company's reorganization plan, which had been approved by Yitzhak Rabin.

Peres also decided to uphold a previous decision to change the authority's status from a ministerial section into a state-owned company.

Rafael employs 4,700 workers, whose pay is among the highest in the public sector, the Treasury said. The authority's payroll ex-

penses equal 72 percent of its overall sales, according to Treasury figures.

A senior officer in the Defense Ministry said Rafael is losing NIS 1 million every day.

Between 1991 and 1995, Rafael received \$25m. in state aid, despite efforts to become self-sufficient.

Meanwhile, Histadrut official Shlomo Shani said Peres "took a mistake" decision, warning that the repercussions of the move will be evident in the upcoming months.

Other Histadrut officials said fired employees would file suits for hefty compensation fees.

In Haifa, deputy mayor Yona Yabov told Israel Radio that Rafael's leaders concealed from the employees crucial facts concerning the authority's condition.

Rafael workers were angered at Peres's decision to go ahead with the planned layoffs, saying there was a surplus of work at the company.

The head of the Rafael works committee, Nahum Baltmao, said the company employs hundreds of independent contractors and that all the firm's workers are doing overtime, making the dismissals unjustified.

If, however, the firm wants to encourage workers to resign, it will have to compensate them accordingly, he added.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

List prepared of industries willing to absorb workers in South: The Manufacturers Association has prepared a list of 60 industries willing to absorb new workers to the southern region. Factories managed by association members in the South - Ofakim, Netivot, Beersheba, Sderot, Kiryat Gat and Kiryat Malachi - are ready to absorb 150 workers, recent victims of the Umam and Adgar factory closures.

The association has submitted the list, representing all sectors of industry to the Employment Authority. Those potential employers have also promised to retrain certain workers.

Manufacturers Association general manager Yoram Belzofsky emphasized the importance of flexibility in job hunting, pointing out that a willingness to work outside Ofakim would assist job seekers greatly. Rachel Neiman

Israel Standards Institute trains inspectors for PA: The Israel Standards Institute has trained and licensed five gold purity inspectors for the Palestinian Authority's Trade and Industry Office. Rachel Neiman

IEC reports 7% increase in sales for '95: The Israel Electric Corporation has reported a seven percent rise in sales for the year from 1994. The average rise in Western Europe is between 1% and 3%. IEC said it had 54,000 new customers in 1995, mainly in the individual home market. Public service demand for electric power grew 9.2%; the home market demanded 6.9% more than in 1994; industry needed 6.3% more and agriculture 5.6%. Rachel Neiman

Electra wins \$2 million contract with IEC: Electra has been awarded a \$2 million Israel Electric Corporation contract. Rachel Neiman

Intel donates multimedia lab to the Technion: Intel (Israel) announced yesterday it has donated a multimedia lab to the Technion. Rachel Neiman

Haagen Daaz rep files restraining order against Elram: Haagen Daaz representative Omni Brand Foods yesterday filed a restraining injunction against developer Elram. Omni claims Elram has violated an agreement concerning a Ra'anana shopping center, where Haagen Daaz was to have been the sole ice cream parlor. Another ice cream parlor has recently opened in the center. Rachel Neiman

Granite Hacarmel Properties subsidiary will invest NIS 67 million in new subsidiary Nitzba Holdings, which it is setting up in partnership with holding company Nitzba Settlement, in return for 10% outstanding capital share. Rachel Neiman

NIS 2.5m. in overpaid 'armona' bills returned to industries: The industrial sector paid out NIS 1 billion in armona municipal fees in 1995, of which NIS 2.5 million was returned due to overpayment, the Manufacturers Association reported. Some NIS 5m. in overpaid armona fees has been returned to industries during the past three and one-half years. The Knesset has approved an 11% hike in fees for 1996. Rachel Neiman

Evergreen Capital Markets to buy 50% of Yahav Investments: Evergreen Capital Markets will acquire 50 percent of Yahav Investments for NIS 1.5 million after which Evergreen will hold 75% of the new merger and 25% will be held by Yahav founders Ofer Yarkoni and Tirza Florentin.

Yahav manages a NIS 130m. investment portfolio for 200 clients. The merger will more than double portfolio size to NIS 300m. Yarkoni will join the Evergreen group and will serve as general manager of Evergreen Yahav Investments. Rachel Neiman

Bill to enact Brodet plan to be offered in February

EVELYN GORDON

A BILL to implement the Brodet Committee's recommendations on reducing banks' holdings in non-bank companies will be submitted to the Knesset in February, Treasury Director-General David Brodet told the Knesset Finance Committee yesterday.

The committee's recommendations, as modified by the cabinet, state that banks will be allowed to hold no more than 20 percent of any non-bank company after 1998, and their total non-bank holdings will be able to comprise no more than 15% of their equity.

Banks will not be able to hold a controlling interest in any non-bank company, even if that interest is less than 20%, and Bank Hapoalim will be required to sell off all its shares in either Clal or Koor.

However, the recommendations also state that banks' holdings in non-bank companies via provident and mutual funds will not be counted as part of either the 20% or the 15% ceiling.

Silvan Shalom (Likud) charged that this loophole makes a mockery of the entire law, because banks will be able to continue controlling numerous non-bank companies via these funds.

However, Brodet said the government will propose laws to prevent banks from appointing members of their funds' investment committees.

In this way, the funds' investment decisions will be independent of the banks, he said.

Dan Tichon (Likud) expressed doubt that the recommendations would ever be implemented, saying the 1999 implementation date gives the banks far too much time to pressure the government into revoking the decision.

In 1981, he noted, the Knesset passed a law forbidding the banks to hold any stock in non-bank companies.

Implementation of this law was repeatedly postponed, and in 1989 the law was revoked altogether at the behest of then finance minister Shimon Peres and then Knesset Finance Committee chairman Avraham Shohat.



Jewish National Fund Land Development Authority director David Nachman holds citrus fruits in the Negev, where the JNF plans to develop orchards to replace the disappearing agricultural areas of the Sharon plain. The JNF's 1996 budget includes NIS 50m. for Negev development.

Betucha fund named best of '95

RACHEL NEIMAN

BETUCHA'S foreign currency mutual fund has been named 1995 best performer by Meitav.

The fund had a positive real yield, including tax rebates, of 45.1 percent.

Psagot foreign currency was ranked tops for positive real yields, not including tax rebates, of 32.7%.

The Meitav 1995 general mutual funds index rose 9.9%, with a positive real yield of 2%.

Two-thirds of mutual funds achieved positive real yields, with preference given to funds specializing in foreign currency, which rose 13.9%.

Funds specializing in Israeli shares traded abroad rose 25.5%, while funds specializing in bonds rose 8.6%.

Meitav cited impressive gains achieved by funds managed by Israel General Bank.

In December 1995, the Meitav's general mutual fund index rose 4.1%, with real positive yield achieved by almost all funds.

'Batman Forever' top grossing movie in '95

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) - Disney's *Toy Story* topped the box office list for the last weekend of 1995, taking in another \$20 million to become the third-highest grossing movie of a year seen as lackluster by many Hollywood analysts.

The computer-animated movie featuring the voices of Tom Hanks, Tim Allen, and Don Rickles has taken in a whopping \$150.6 million since its release last month - behind *Batman Forever*, which grossed \$184 million, and another Hanks vehicle, *Apollo 13*, which did \$172 million worth of box-office business.

According to initial estimates released yesterday, another movie appealing to children and adults alike, the Robin Williams fantasy *Jumanji*, held down the second spot over the New Year's weekend, grossing \$18 million.

Grumpier Old Men, starring Jack Lemmon and Walter Matthau as well as Ann-Margret and Sophia Loren, took in \$15 million - enough to give it third place on the box-office list.

Waiting to Exhale, a movie that examines the lives of black women and stars Whitney Houston and Angela Bassett, fell to fourth this weekend with \$13.8 million. It opened the Christmas weekend at No. 1.

Steve Martin's *Father of the Bride: Part II* rounded out the top five, taking in \$12.8 million.

Heat and *Sabrina* each took to \$10 million, to give them a tie for sixth place. Rounding out the top 10 were *Tom and Huck* (\$6.8m.), the Jean-Claude Van Damme hockey thriller *Sudden Death* (\$5.5m.) and Rob Reiner's political comedy *The American President* (\$4.5m.).

TASE to proceed with computerization for ongoing trading

RACHEL NEIMAN

THE Tel Aviv Stock Exchange intends to proceed with full computerization for simultaneous ongoing trading, TASE chairman Haim Stoessel said yesterday.

Summarizing activity at the TASE's annual end-of-year review, Stoessel said given the success of the Karam computerized index, "we have reached the conclusion that we must eliminate open outcry trading, starting with the Two-Sided Index."

Stoessel said he hoped computerized trading of certain Two-Sided companies would be in place by the end of 1996.

"This is the most ambitious computer project the TASE has ever embarked on," said TASE director Sam Bronfeld.

This year was characterized by a continuation of the capital market downturn of early 1994.

"The small number of public offerings, weak turnovers and index trends indicate a downturn not felt since 1988," Stoessel said, but added "this gloomy situation

transpired against a background of rapid market growth and a certain measure of improved profitability, along with a decline in the rate of inflation."

The bright side was heightened interest on the part of foreign investors in the TASE and to Israeli companies traded abroad.

Stoessel called on the government to encourage this trend with privatization; the TASE itself has decided to calculate indexes in agorot, rather than points.

The changeover will take place by the end of 1996.

In late February 1995 the Two-Sided index hit a low, falling to half its 1993 level. Between March and December 1995, the market recovered and indexes rose to 11.5% above the parallel 1994 level but were still lower than the parallel 1993 level.

The TASE did not fulfill a significant role in raising capital in 1995, Stoessel pointed out.

No government companies were listed, with the exception of Dead Sea Bromine, which split off from Dead Sea Works as part of a reorganization.

An additional disappointment was Bank Mizrahi and Israel Discount Banks failure to register shares on the TASE.

Stoessel said he "hoped this most important procedure would be executed in early 1996." The ongoing downturn has hurt those firms which were planning public offerings, he noted, primarily small, young companies.

The bond market was most affected by highs and lows. "It is doubtful whether it is possible to do something to shorten the duration of the lows," said Stoessel, who suggested the downturn be used to lay legal

foundations - regulations and other tools.

Steps taken this year to protect the public interest included passage of a law determining standards for portfolio managers and investment advisers, and actions taken against securities law violators.

"Class-action suits have also become part of the Israeli capital market horizon," he said.

The options market is a source of pride for the TASE management, with daily turnovers of 35,000 options on average, in April 1995 and a record high of 72,000.

The number of active investors also increased to a high of between 10,000 and 12,000 between mid-1994 and March 1995.

"Options have become an important part of investment strategy on the Israeli capital market as well," Stoessel said.

Toward the end of 1995, the TASE began reexamining entry criteria for bourse membership "in light of the past few years experience and of international trends."

Teva reaches arrangement on debt owed by Kupat Holim Clalit

Court also sets down pay-back terms for Clalit with others

RACHEL NEIMAN and JUDY SIEGEL

TEVA and Kupat Holim Clalit have reached an arrangement concerning a \$59.1 million outstanding debt owed to Teva since December 31, 1994, by which Clalit's debt will be reduced 6.75 percent.

Although the agreement is still pending court approval, "I think it's a good solution," said CFO Dan Sueskind.

Teva will probably enter the \$4m. one-time write off into its 1995 books, he said.

"If we receive 93.25 cents on the dollar and solve the debt problem within one year, my feeling is the capital market will receive this positively," he said.

Clalit will pay the sum in equal installments, with the entire debt

to be covered no later than March 1997.

Meanwhile, a debtors' arrangement involving a non-commercial organization has been approved by the district court for the first time.

The arrangement, presented yesterday, sets down pay-back terms for Kupat Holim Clalit.

The Tel Aviv District Court's deputy president, Judge Yeshayahu Levit, approved the arrangement, whereby suppliers of services and equipment to the health fund owed up to NIS 75,000 will receive all their money in cash by the end of

January.

There are 3,000 such suppliers. The health fund also owes 600 other suppliers a moderate amount of money. They will get 90% to cash by the end of January.

Those with very large debts pending will get their money back gradually over several years.

Bank Hapoalim and Bank Leumi will be paid back over several years, starting in 1998.

As a result of the court-endorsed arrangement, the government will transfer an initial payment of NIS 535 million.

The Treasury committed itself on Sunday to pay up to NIS 2.75 billion to carry out the arrangement.

ISRAEL MONEY MARKETS					
Patah (foreign currency deposit rates) (2.1.96)					
Currency (deposit for)	3 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	12 MONTHS		
U.S. dollar (\$250,000)	4.70	4.82	4.82		
Pound sterling (£100,000)	4.50	4.50	4.50		
German mark (DM 200,000)	2.20	2.12	2.12		
Swiss franc (SF 200,000)	-	-	-		
Yen (¥10 million year)	-	-	-		
(Rates vary higher or lower than indicated according to deposit)					
Shekel Foreign Exchange Rates* (29.12.9)					
CURRENCIES AND TRANSFERS					
Currency basket	Buy	Sell	BANKNOTES	Buy	Sell
U.S. dollar	3.5470	3.8248	-	-	3.5781
German mark	2.1708	2.2394	2.13	2.24	2.1888
French franc	4.8057	4.8983	4.72	4.86	4.8530
Japanese yen (¥100)	0.8550	0.8483	0.82	0.83	0.8408
Dutch guilder (G100)	3.0178	3.0886	2.96	3.11	3.0462
Swiss franc (SF 100)	1.8891	1.9704	1.80	2.00	1.8638
Swedish krona	2.7053	2.7470	2.65	2.78	2.7206
Norwegian krona	0.4671	0.4747	0.46	0.48	0.4680
Danish krone	0.4820	0.5000	0.48	0.51	0.4860
Finland mark	0.2804	0.2886	0.28	0.29	0.2861
Canadian dollar	0.7136	0.7282	0.70	0.74	0.7207
Australian dollar	2.2777	2.3146	2.23	2.25	2.2591
S. African rand	2.8190	2.8804	2.77	2.83	2.8357
British pound (£100)	0.8519	0.8857	0.77	0.87	0.8586
Austrian schilling (S10)	1.0588	1.0797	1.03	1.08	1.0622
Italian lire (L1000)	3.0388	3.1286	3.03	3.19	3.1085
Jordanian dinar	1.8882	1.9849	1.82	2.03	1.9785
Egyptian pound	-	-	4.27	4.57	4.3890
EUU	-	-	0.88	0.95	0.8876
Yish part	3.9884	4.0288	-	-	4.0181
Yish part	4.3828	4.0427	4.87	5.11	6.0097
Spanish peseta (100)	2.5638	2.6083	2.51	2.65	2.5825

* These rates vary according to bank. Bank of Israel.
SOURCE: BANK LEUMI

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Key Representative Rates

	Change
US dollar ... NIS 2.1360	---
Sterling ... NIS 4.8830	---
Mark ... NIS 2.1883	---

Saudi Arabia announces budget with bigger deficit

RIYADH (AP) - Saudi Arabia, the world's largest oil exporter, announced a 1996 budget yesterday with a deficit of 18.5 billion Riyals (\$4.93 billion), 23 percent higher than last year's shortfall.

The cabinet said revenues for 1996 were expected to be 131.5 billion Riyals (\$35b), down from last year's 135 billion (\$36b). Expenditure remained unchanged at 150 billion Riyals (\$40b).

No further details were immediately available about the budget, traditionally announced at the beginning of the year.

It was submitted to King Fahd just before the monarch issued a decree asking Crown Prince Abdullah to take over managing government affairs while he rested.

News of Abdullah taking temporary charge of the vast and wealthy country in place of the ailing Fahd and the budget announcement were expected to cause jitters in oil markets when trading resumes today after the New Year's holiday.

The forecast for less revenues in the 1996 budget came as a surprise in view of increased demand on oil and the firmer prices expected in 1996.

The kingdom has been covering recent deficits, which peaked in 1994, by borrowing, mainly on the domestic market.

It has incurred a domestic debt believed to be in excess of \$70b.

The Saudi economy has in recent years been bogged down by slumping oil prices and the massive cost of the 1991 Gulf War that liberated Kuwait from Iraqi occupation.

The kingdom paid \$60b. for the US-led coalition force, which fought the war.

Despite efforts to diversify and privatize the economy, the oil sector continues to account for one-third of the country's Gross Domestic Product, and around 80% of export earnings.

Saudi Arabia, a vast country of 17 million people, sits on more than a quarter of the world's oil reserves.

Its national currency is 100% covered by gold and dollar reserves and per capita income is about \$6,500.

Saudi change may boost oil prices

DUBAI (Reuters) - World oil prices may rise modestly after King Fahd of Saudi Arabia handed the running of government to his brother, allowing him time to recover from a stroke, energy analysts said yesterday.

Oil markets, which reopen today after the New Year holidays, are acutely sensitive to any political change in Saudi Arabia - the world's largest oil exporter - and may take the news as an opportunity to take prices higher, they said.

"If the market is looking for an excuse it might go higher on this news," Geoff Pyne, oil analyst at UBS Limited said.

Fahd yesterday gave the running of government to his appointee Abdullah to allow the 73-year-old monarch time to recover from his stroke in November, the first time Fahd has not run the kingdom since he assumed the throne in 1982.

The succession to Fahd is viewed nervously by some oil traders because of Abdullah's reputation of taking a more tough traditionalist line.

Fahd has adopted a policy of moderate oil prices and stable oil supplies after years of hawkish price strategy by Riyadh in the 1970s and early '80s.

But analysts say any price rally on the news from Riyadh is likely to be short-lived and stress that with Abdullah running Saudi affairs the kingdom's oil policy, and

temperatures in the major heating fuel consumer markets of the US and Europe.

Any threat now, perceived or actual, to oil supplies could act as a spur for market bulls to take prices even higher, further boosting Riyadh's revenues after years of cash flow shortages.

North Sea Brent crude futures on London's International Petroleum Exchange closed at \$18.33 a barrel on Friday, compared to below \$16 in the summer.

A move by Saudi Arabia to cut output to boost oil prices could likely backfire because producers from non-OPEC states, such as Norway, would be able to capture market share at the expense of Riyadh.

The fact is that Saudi oil policy is determined by economic circumstances. Whoever is in power, unless they defy economic sense, cannot afford to cut production because oil revenues are set out," Pyne said, referring to the Saudi state budget and the kingdom's present five year plan (1995-2000).

Saudi Arabia produces eight million barrels per day of oil - meeting around 10 percent of world demand - and is viewed in markets as one of the most dependable sources of oil.

World oil prices are already at their highest level in seven months because of freezing temperatures in the major heating fuel consumer markets of the US and Europe.

Stocks up for 2nd day in row

TEL AVIV STOCK MARKET

FELICE MARANZ

Two-Sided index: 209.63 (+0.49%)

Maof Index: 217.13 (+0.60%)

STOCKS rose for a second straight day yesterday, boosted by statistics indicating stronger-than-expected growth.

Gains were led by Discount Investment Corp. and its parent companies, IDB Development Corp. and IDB Holding Corp., after the Tel Aviv District Court decided Iscar Ltd. must turn over its financial results to comply with Tel Aviv Stock Exchange reporting regulations.

Discount Investment owns a 26 percent stake in Iscar, which manufactures tools for cutting metal.

The Maof Index increased 0.60% to 217.13, and the Two-Sided Index went up 0.49% to 209.63.

Of 1,011 issues trading across the exchange, an equal number of shares rose and fell. Almost NIS 74 million worth of shares traded, NIS 25.2m. below Sunday's level and NIS 26.9m. below last week's average trading level.

This past year "was a better year than was expected, and the outlook for 1996 is optimistic, too," said Dan Galai, a managing director of Tel Aviv brokerage firm Sigma. "There's a positive atmosphere in the market."

The Central Bureau of Statistics said yesterday it estimates gross domestic product rose a higher-than-expected 6.9% in 1995. Inflation is expected to rise 7.8% in 1995, below the 8%-11% target rate set at the beginning of the year.

Gaining shares listed on the Maof Index were led by Discount Investment, which went up 1.25% after the court decided Iscar must hand over its results.

IDB Development Corp., which owns 55% of Discount Investment, rose 1.75%; and IDB Holding Corp., which owns 71% of IDB Development, rose 1.5%.

Other gaining shares on the index included Clal (Israel) Ltd., which increased 3%, and subsidiary Clal Industries Ltd., which rose 2%.

Losing shares on the Maof Index included Teva Pharmaceuticals Ltd., which fell 0.5%.

Teva announced that it may receive \$55.1m. from Kupat Holim Clalit to cancel its outstanding debts with the company. Clalit owed Teva \$59.1m. at the end of 1994, and Teva agreed to wipe out 6.75% of it. (Bloomberg)

German bank execs expect significant changes during '96

FRANKFURT (Reuters) - Top executives of Germany's largest banks said they expect extensive industry changes during 1996 - from electronic banking to a planned single European currency - that will demand new strategies.

The executives said the push for globalization as more financial markets become deregulated will also dominate the German banking scene in the new year, according to comments published in Germany's *Boersen Zeitung*.

"The classic commercial bank" is in trouble, Deutsche Bank AG chief executive, Hilmar Kopper said in the newspaper.

Explosive growth in the electronic media in recent years has changed the competitive situation facing the German banking industry, forcing banks to redefine their roles in a computer-dominated society.

Commerzbank AG chief executive, Martin Kohlhäuser said the bank's strategy for 1996 is to focus on new competition will not only come from traditional banks but also from financial institutions seeking to take full advantage of the "information highway" on the Internet to reach additional customers.

But he said the traditional bank branch will remain a key-stone of the banking industry.

"The branches are and will remain the home base of the 'universal banker,'" Kohlhäuser said.

Dresdner Bank AG chief executive Juergen Sarrazin said competition will also intensify across Europe ahead of the planned introduction of a single European currency in 1999.

German banks must take advantage of the mark's strength and stability as the new currency is put into circulation.

"Customers will rely on the advice and support of their house banks during the stormy times during a change in the currency," Sarrazin said.



An activist dresses up in a US flag as a street theater group in New Delhi stages a protest play against India's free-market reform program over the weekend. The activists say multinational companies from the West hurt Indian interests. (Reuters)

Fliers to gain from lapse in US airline tax

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - US airlines yesterday stopped collecting a 10 percent tax on domestic tickets, giving some travelers a windfall thanks to the budget deadlock in Washington.

Authority to collect the decades-old excise tax expired on New Year's Eve in the absence of a deal on the federal budget.

Renewal of the ticket tax and two others - the \$6 fee on international departures and 6.25 percent tax on air freight - was part of the budget bill vetoed by President Bill Clinton last month.

American Airlines and Delta said they were passing the savings onto their customers.

"We will simply leave the fare levels, minus the tax, where they are, so the net cost to consumers during this period when the tax is not in effect is 10% less," said Tim Smith, a spokesman at American's Fort Worth, Texas, headquarters.

Seizing a marketing opportunity, he added that the lapse of the tax made this "a great time" to buy tickets and save 10%.

Delta announced a similar policy. "It is our intention to pass on the savings to the fare-paying passengers," spokesman Clay McConnell said in Atlanta.

But offsetting the potential gain to some travelers, United Airlines said that it had matched other, unspecified US carriers by raising fares 10% yesterday.

"There was a 10 percent fare increase, so fares would be the same," said Joe Hopkins, a spokesman for United in Chicago.

American and Delta said they were taking steps to refund the tax for tickets paid for in 1995 for any 1996 travel before the expected renewal of tax in a future budget deal.

TEL AVIV STOCKS

Multi-sided trading			Two-sided trading		
Name	Price	% Change	Name	Price	% Change
Bank Leumi	185.00	+0.5	Bank Leumi	185.00	+0.5
Bank Hapoalim	175.00	+0.3	Bank Hapoalim	175.00	+0.3
Bank Mizrahi	165.00	+0.2	Bank Mizrahi	165.00	+0.2
Bank Discount	155.00	+0.4	Bank Discount	155.00	+0.4
Bank IDB	145.00	+0.1	Bank IDB	145.00	+0.1
Bank Leumi	135.00	+0.6	Bank Leumi	135.00	+0.6
Bank Hapoalim	125.00	+0.4	Bank Hapoalim	125.00	+0.4
Bank Mizrahi	115.00	+0.3	Bank Mizrahi	115.00	+0.3
Bank Discount	105.00	+0.5	Bank Discount	105.00	+0.5
Bank IDB	95.00	+0.2	Bank IDB	95.00	+0.2
Bank Leumi	85.00	+0.7	Bank Leumi	85.00	+0.7
Bank Hapoalim	75.00	+0.5	Bank Hapoalim	75.00	+0.5
Bank Mizrahi	65.00	+0.4	Bank Mizrahi	65.00	+0.4
Bank Discount	55.00	+0.6	Bank Discount	55.00	+0.6
Bank IDB	45.00	+0.3	Bank IDB	45.00	+0.3
Bank Leumi	35.00	+0.8	Bank Leumi	35.00	+0.8
Bank Hapoalim	25.00	+0.6	Bank Hapoalim	25.00	+0.6
Bank Mizrahi	15.00	+0.5	Bank Mizrahi	15.00	+0.5
Bank Discount	5.00	+0.7	Bank Discount	5.00	+0.7
Bank IDB	0.00	+0.4	Bank IDB	0.00	+0.4

Welcome Home Fund, Toy Fund contributors

- THIS week's Forsake Me Not listings were published on Friday. Below are the Toy Fund and Welcome Home Fund contributors:
- TOY FUND**
- NIS 720 Andrea and Jonathan Kanaan, J'm.
- NIS 500 In honor of my grandchildren, Ariel, Roni and Tamar - Grandpa Bruno, J'm. In memory of our beloved daughter Orli - Marsha and Hugo Maron, Tel Aviv.
- NIS 368.15 Happy birthday to all my friends with birthdays in December, happy Hanukka to everyone - Anon, J'm.
- NIS 300 From the Tzedaka collection of the Kaplan children, Nachshon, Aliza, Noam and Ma'ayan, and their proud parents, Judy and David, Ra'anana.
- NIS 280 In the name of our 15 grandchildren, Gil, Talia, Liron, Sarai, Nir, Shira, Elad, Tamar, Ariel, Yonathan, Metal, Beth, Rachel, Robbie and Rafi - Sol and Barbara Liebowitz, J'm.
- NIS 250 In memory of our unforgettable Alice (Lizette) Weigl in the 10th anniversary of her decease - The Weigl Family, Tel Aviv. Esther Shoham, Sde Nchemiah, B. Heilarem, Mod'ra.
- NIS 200 Anon, Kfar Sava. The students of the Walworth Baruch American International School in Israel, Mir Shmaryahu, Zvi and Miriam Tal, Kibbutz Sde Neveva. Edward and Betty Wolfe, Kfar Sava.
- NIS 180 Rita Feikstein, Ra'anana. In loving memory of Nery Shifra Babad and "To life" for her newborn great-granddaughter, Shifra - Hava and Shaul Buzson, J'm.
- NIS 150 In memory of Yitzhak Rabin - Avraham and Rebeca Feidman, J'm. Anon.
- NIS 100 In memory of my grandchild, Dorit and Eli Rosenblatt-Kara, Sde Warburg.
- NIS 100 In memory of Doron - Anon, Ramat Aviv.
- NIS 100 Wolf Grunberg, Bogota.
- NIS 100 To greet the birth of Sari Margalit-Rabin, born to the First Family, in memory of my dear friend, Yitzhak Rabin - combined Tzedaka savings from Sari, Nadav and Mattar Rothberg, Moshav Shoshuvim. Three times Hai - Happy Hanukka in my dear nephews Yoni, Itan and Jonathan in Manchester, England - Aunt Sue, J'm.
- NIS 100 Anon, Beit Shמש, Anon. Tel Aviv. Ellen Zwart-Gerson, Bat Yam. For my beloved grandchildren Liran and Avishai - Savon Ise, Rishon LeZion. In honor of our grandson Gilad's sixth Hanukka - Raynor and Zvi Rosenberg, Ashdod. In honor and with love of our seven grandchildren - Nancy and David Founer, Haifa. In honor of my wonderful grandchildren, Erez, Ella, Omer, Shai and Shaul - Helene Levy, Haifa. Giv'at Ezer Henkin, Holoft. Shulamit Gavron, Giv'atayim. Marina Shמש, J'm.
- NIS 100 In memory of our dear husband and father Hans Gunman - Gess, Mickey and Danny, Haifa.
- NIS 100 In honor of our granddaughter Amy Yakobe of Brooklyn, NY - Carol and David Froelich, Rehovot. In loving memory of our Aunt Edith, who loved buying toys for children - A. and M.K., Ashdod.
- NIS 100 In honor of my grandchildren - Anon, Ramat Gan.
- NIS 100 Anon, Haifa.
- NIS 100 Berta Kaufman, Borsheba.
- NIS 100 Happy Hanukka to the children of Israel - Doreen, Tel Aviv. Eva Berkson, Neutanya.
- NIS 100 Anon.
- NIS 100 From the Estate of Pearl Samuels, Miami Beach, FL.
- NIS 100 In memory of Yitzhak Rabin - Beth Chaim Preschool, Feasterville, PA.
- NIS 100 From the Zehli Children-Naomi, Avital, Yael and Aaron, Seattle, WA.
- NIS 100 In memory of Yitzhak Rabin, hero, leader and martyr - Dave and Edith Gess, J'm. In honor of my brother-to-be, "Max," who I hope will be born next month, plus a

ISRAEL DISCOUNT BANK

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Sports unions' future to be decided today

HEATHER CHAIT

THE doors of the Sports Federation of Israel, the umbrella organization of 18 local sports associations, were closed yesterday ahead of today's crucial meeting to decide on the unions' future.

The unions were to have become independent on January 1 but until the formal announcement, scheduled for today's meeting, the workers were in a state of limbo, being employed neither by the SFI nor by the government's Sports Authority, their future sponsor.

Deputy Minister of Education, Culture and Sport Micha Goldman set January 15 as the deadline for the unions to declare their independence at which time the Sports Authority, under Goldman, will allocate the budget for 1996.

As of yesterday, employees of the almost defunct SFI, including coaches, had no insurance coverage and contracts were no longer operational.

The dispute between the SFI chairman Yehzekel Harmelech and Goldman which led to the delayed independence, lies in Goldman's lack of clarification on the budgets of the unions.

Yesterday Harmelech said, "As of this moment, Goldman has not given us the necessary tools to carry out the reforms which we initiated a year ago. We hope he will keep his promises within a few days so the independent unions can begin functioning."

For his part, Goldman called on the unions to support the reforms.

"Over the past few days we have seen a witch hunt by the SFI in an irresponsible and threatening manner, with false facts, against the process of the unions' independence and the SFI's inevitable breakup. I hope the delegates [to the meeting] will rise above these allegations and promote Israeli sport with their votes."

Judokas, coach bolt Colorado training camp for Vegas gambling spree

WHETHER the fact that national judo coach Moshe Ponti took his proteges gambling in Las Vegas, knowing that from January 1 he would no longer be employed by the SFI, is a moot point.

Ponti, the enfant terrible of Israeli judo, made light of the waves that shook the judo community yesterday, dismissing the gambling spree as a "chance to recover" from a rigorous training schedule.

Asked why he had disappeared in a rented car with judokas Oren Smadja, Arik Ze'evi and Guy Fogel from their high altitude practice camp in Colorado Springs to the lewd attractions of Vegas, Ponti explained, "After three weeks of intensive training and before three more weeks in Japan, I decided to take the sportsmen to relax on a trip to Nevada, Utah, Arizona and on the way, we went to Las Vegas."

The Judo Association is due to meet in a few days to discuss the issue. Heather Chait

Spurs hammer Manchester United

Tottenham (Reuter) - Tottenham dealt a heavy blow to Manchester United's chances of catching Newcastle, by beating the Reds 4-1 last night.

Also yesterday, Liverpool, 2-0 down to Nottingham Forest after 18 minutes, stormed back to win 4-2 with two goals from in-form striker Robbie Fowler.

The victory carried Liverpool back to 2-2 with two fine headers in the 31st and 41st minutes, both from crosses from fellow striker Stan Collymore, playing against his old club.

Collymore himself shot narrowly wide from 35 meters five minutes into the second half but the barking Brazilian's control failed him five meters out.

Back at Anfield, Steve Stone shot Nottingham Forest into a 13th-minute lead and Ian Woan made it 2-0 five minutes later as Forest swarmed forward.

But Fowler pulled Liverpool back to 2-2 with two fine headers in the 31st and 41st minutes, both from crosses from fellow striker Stan Collymore, playing against his old club.

Middlesbrough, again without injured Nick Barby and striker Jan-Aage Fjortoft, suffered another defeat, losing 2-0 at home to Aston Villa in a night match.

Villa took the lead after 21 minutes with a spectacular 20-meter diagonal volley from defender Alan Wright, his first goal for the club. Striker Tommy Johnson got the second on 40 minutes with a fine, low shot, completing a 17-touch Villa move.

Middlesbrough's best chance fell to Juninho 15 minutes into

the second half, but the barking Brazilian's control failed him five meters out.

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Collymore himself shot nar-

West Ham plays teen 'keeper

ANGRY West Ham manager Harry Redknapp criticized Premier League chiefs after being forced to make history yesterday by playing a goalkeeper who turned 17 just three days ago.

West Ham slipped to a 2-1 defeat at Manchester City, leaving them firmly in the bottom half of the standings.

With Luděk Mikosko suspended and Les Sealey injured, Redknapp was obliged to hand teenager Neil Finn a debut, making him the youngest player ever to appear in the Premier League - and play for West Ham.

Redknapp said Premier League chiefs would not allow him to make an emergency loan signing.

Reuter

Mickey mania: Class wins out over hype

SPORTSWATCH
ARYEH DEAN COHEN

MICKEY to the right of us, Mickey to the left of us, dribbled and "bounced. With apologies to Alfred Lord Tennyson, that's pretty much what it seemed like last week on ITV, between Tuesday night's documentary on Mickey Berkowitz's career and Thursday night's Yad Elishu farewell celebration of it.

But if anyone in Israeli sports is deserving of what seemed like his own week on ITV - if you include all the promos before and in-between the two broadcasts - it's the classy Berkowitz. And ITV, for the most part, proved up to the event, particularly in "Uniform Number 9," the documentary on the Maccabi legend's career.

ITV archivists deserve a ton of credit for putting together the clips which were such an integral part of Uri Levy and Yanatan Kneller's fine effort. Particularly amusing was the interview with Berkowitz's mother, who recalled his running off to shoot hoops when he was supposed to be studying.

Following Berkowitz around to his old stomping grounds - many of which have since been transformed from basketball courts to other things - was also a nice touch, as was the black and white footage of former Maccabi assistant coach Arye Davidescu training the young Berkowitz by holding him back with what looked like a giant rubber band while the young Mickey worked on his break to the basket.

A particularly moving shot

showed Berkowitz and his Maccabi teammates being welcomed by then prime minister Yitzhak Rabin after their first European Cup title in 1977. Too bad Levy spoiled it by pushing Mickey into talking about his political leanings, which was unnecessary and contributed nothing to the documentary. The quick shift from Rabin to Tel Aviv Mayor Ronni Milo was also unnecessary.

Interviewing various European basketball legends like Wayne Brabender and Dino Meneghin was good, but even better was Levy's uncovering a haredi man from Jerusalem who remembered his days as a Maccabi fan and the occasional lifts Berkowitz gave him from Yad Elishu to the bus back to Jerusalem.

In between, it was exciting to see Mickey in his salad days, slipping past defenders for his patented lay-up off the glass or side jumper. As a fan, I made sure to realize even more how much more personal following Maccabi was in the days of Mickey, Motti, Lou, Algie and Jimbo, before the dilution of the European Cup tournament. And listening to the play-by-play of first Alex Giladi and then Yoram Arbel we also realized how much they contributed to those games, too.

Full points to Levy and Kneller for their efforts, worthy of Uniform No. 9. Here's hoping the pair can inject the same

professionalism and interest into the moribund Maccabi game half-time features that they did into this documentary.

AS for the farewell ceremony and game itself, viewers who didn't have their pre-game anti-hype shot might have suffered from overkill. It's hard to keep everyone from having their say on such a night, but did we really need to hear the Olympic Committee anthem? I don't even recall ever hearing the anthem at the Olympic Games before. And who chose the theme from "2001" for Mickey's entrance?

Silence can be golden, certainly better than mindless interviewing. Moshe Gertel was guilty of the latter when he asked an obviously thrilled Tal Brody "Are you excited?" just before Brody went out onto the floor. The "looks off the faces of Brody and the other ex-Maccabi players - especially Algie Perry right before he was introduced - spoke volumes. Gertel should've left them alone.

The Yad Elishu folks also should've figured out a better way for non-ITV personnel to interview the players rather than have them cutting in on Gertel's attempts to talk with Boatwright, Silver, et al.

In the end, Berkowitz emerged as a winner, his class - especially in an interview speaking of how he

wished his late father could have made it to the ceremony - triumphing over the tinsel Thursday nights at home with Maccabi on the tube has never been and will never be the same without him.

PRIME SPORTS' coverage of Sunday night's NFL action was fine, but viewers must've wanted to throw penalty flags against both Prime and Sports Channel for not offering Saturday's games. Neither Prime nor Sports Channel offered the action, meaning we missed the Eagles' 58-7 victory over the Lions, the greatest offensive output ever produced in any NFL playoff game. This week, Prime Sports offers NFL divisional playoff coverage on Saturday and Sunday night starting 11 pm.

Sports Channel's also had a nasty habit lately of promising one Saturday night NBA game, then delivering another. This week, the listings promised us Friday night's Indiana-Chicago game, but instead, we got a Houston-Orlando contest from earlier in the week.

While the Penny Hardaway heroics were exciting, most viewers already knew about them from the newspapers, whereas seeing the Friday night game would've been a chance to see action they hadn't yet read about.

With Prime offering live NBA games Sunday night, ITV's unlikely to keep its NBA audience if it doesn't keep its programming promises.

Penn State destroys Auburn

TAMPA (AP) - It doesn't matter where Joe Paterno brings Penn State for the holidays. Give the coach a month to prepare and the Nittany Lions are usually successful.

Wally Richardson threw four touchdown passes in the rain and No. 15 Penn State set Outback Bowl records for points and total offense yesterday in a 43-14 rout of Auburn at Tampa Stadium.

Bohby Engram had four catches for a howl-record 113 yards and two TDs, while Stephen Pitts rushed for 113 yards and scored on his only catch of the day to pace the Nittany Lions. Penn State gained 487 yards.

Richardson, whose inexperience hurt Penn State early in the season, completed 13 of 24 passes for 217 yards. The only intercep-

tion he threw set up one of Auburn's two touchdowns.

Engram scored on catches of 9 and 20 yards in the third quarter when Penn State scored 27 points to pull away from a 16-7 halftime lead. Pitts also scored in the period and Curtis Enis added a 1-yard TD run set up by Kim Herring's second interception of Auburn's Patrick Nix.

Auburn scored on Robert Baker's 25-yard, second-quarter reception and Kevin McLeod's 12-yard run in the fourth period.

The Tigers got 119 yards rushing from Stephen Davis, but 92 of those came in the first quarter. The running back was shaken up near the end of the opening quarter and played little after that.

Penn State rushed for 152 yards in the first half, controlling

the clock and eventually forcing Auburn out of its game plan. Meanwhile, Richardson picked his spots to throw deep on Auburn's young secondary.

The turning point came in the final minute of the second quarter.

Nix, under pressure from the Penn State pass rush, underthrew a receiver at midfield and Herring intercepted at his 49 with 19 seconds remaining in the half.

Richardson found Joe Jurevicius streaking up the left sideline for a 43-yard gain on the next play to set his 8-yard TD throw to Mike Archie for a 16-7 halftime lead.

EARLY BOWL RESULTS: Outback Bowl: Penn State 43, Auburn 14; Gator Bowl: Syracuse 41, Clemson 0; Citrus Bowl: Tennessee 20, Ohio State 14; Raymond James: Penn State 31, Florida State 17; Sun Bowl: Northwestern 21, California 17; Orange Bowl: Florida St. v. Notre Dame

Bnei Yehuda to make temporary move

THE Bnei Yehuda soccer team will for the next few weeks play its games in Bloomfield Stadium rather than on its own field in Tel Aviv's Hatikva neighborhood, after nearly 13,000 fans crowded into the Hatikva stadium for Saturday's game against Betar Jerusalem. The stadium's official capacity is only 9,500.

Thousands of fans without tickets had come from Jerusalem to see the game. While some 700 tickets remained unsold, the stadium box office was closed for Shabbat. Confronted by the tense crowd, police decided to open all the stadium gates and let the fans in, thus avoiding a stampede of the type that caused three deaths and numerous injuries at the Arad Festival last summer.

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Minutemen still No. 1

NEW YORK (AP) - Massachusetts won three games in as many days in Hawaii, survived the scare of an injury to its top player and held on to the No. 1 ranking for the second week in a row.

The Minutemen (10-0) were the runaway choice yesterday of the national media panel, receiving 62 of 65 first-place votes and 1,622 points, 94 more than Kentucky, which was No. 2 for the second week.

In fact, the top 10 stayed the same from last week with Memphis, Kansas, Cincinnati, Georgetown, Connecticut, Villanova, Arizona and Iowa holding their spots.

Memphis (8-0), Cincinnati (8-0) and Connecticut (10-1) each received one first-place vote.

Massachusetts didn't know if it would have junior center Marcus Camby for the Rainbow Classic championship game Saturday night until game time. He bruised his right knee two minutes into the semifinal victory over Southern California and didn't return.

He didn't start, but played 33 minutes against Syracuse in the title game, finishing with 20 points, 11 rebounds and three blocks in a 65-47 victory over the previously unbeaten Orangemen.

Syracuse moved up two spots to lead the Second Ten and was followed by Wake Forest, Illinois, Georgia, Utah, North Carolina, Mississippi State, Virginia Tech, Duke and UCLA.

The last five spots were held by Michigan, Clemson and newcomers Texas, Boston College and New Mexico.

Dropping from the rankings were Missouri (8-4), which was 18th before losing two games in the Rainbow Classic; Virginia (5-3), which was 22nd but fell to Virginia Tech, and Tulsa (5-1), which was 25th.

NBA leaders

(through December 30)

Scoring Average	FG	FT	PTS	AVG	
Jordan, Chi.	26	306	232	841	30.0
Rubinson, S.A.	27	258	235	715	26.5
Malone, Utah	29	275	210	705	26.4
Hardaway, Chi.	29	238	218	724	25.0
Osguin, Hou.	30	284	151	731	24.4
Colangelo, L.A.	31	254	158	740	23.9
Barclay, Phi.	26	205	174	610	23.5
Rice, Chi.	29	243	177	673	23.2
C. Robinson, Port.	29	222	139	672	23.2
Johnson, Chi.	29	241	151	650	23.0
Elliott, S.A.	26	202	130	594	22.8
Pippen, Chi.	26	227	85	621	22.2
Rubinson, Minn.	27	214	128	589	21.8
Kemp, Sea.	29	228	109	601	21.5
Richardson, Sac.	26	181	135	552	21.2
Hill, Dal.	26	211	181	613	21.1
Erving, N.Y.	27	224	117	526	21.1
Miller, Ind.	26	183	135	540	20.9
Howard, Wash.	26	244	80	571	20.4
Baker, Minn.	27	223	100	547	20.3

FG Percentage	FGA	PCT	
Murphy, Wash.	148	236	61.9
Kemp, Sea.	226	340	66.5
Brown, Hou.	115	200	57.5
O. Davis, Ind.	104	181	57.5
Smith, Ind.	107	177	57.1
Stockton, Utah	126	218	58.0
Polynice, Sac.	114	202	56.4
Seaborn, Port.	112	199	56.3
Owens, Minn.	120	221	55.7
Waters, Wash.	130	234	55.6

Rebounds	AST	STL	BLK	AVG	
Murphy, Wash.	9	113	244	357	12.3
Kemp, Sea.	29	110	234	344	12.3
Robinson, S.A.	27	85	228	323	12.0
Barclay, Phi.	26	85	211	298	11.5
Williams, N.J.	27	132	179	310	11.5
Osguin, Hou.	30	73	282	335	11.2
Baker, Minn.	27	84	187	281	10.4
Oakley, N.Y.	26	104	185	289	10.4
Dudley, Port.	28	100	189	288	10.3
Redjic, Bos.	26	58	227	283	10.2

Assists	AST	AVG	
Stockton, Utah	29	318	10.9
Stockton, Port.	29	280	9.7
Johnson, S.A.	29	245	8.1
Johnson, S.A.	30	289	9.0
Kidd, Dal.	29	239	8.0
Payton, Sea.	28	228	8.1

No NBA games were scheduled for December 31 or January 1

GUESS WHICH?

Which NHL team had the best home record last season?

Quebec Nordiques
New Jersey Devils
Pittsburgh Penguins
Detroit Red Wings

Answer tomorrow.

Answer to yesterday's "Guess Which?": The Quebec Nordiques became the Colorado Avalanche beginning this season.

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Daylight saving time to start March 14

THE Knesset Interior Committee yesterday decided that daylight saving time will start on March 14, one month earlier than last year. It will officially end on September 15.

Interior Minister Haim Ramon presented a proposal that summer time be extended by two months over the next three years.

"I believe the most significant thing for the general public is the daylight hours. I believe the majority of the public are in favor of extending them," Ramon said.

The committee heard objections from religious MKs, who claim this makes prayer times difficult. It was agreed to carry out a survey on public acceptance of the extra month and if it is

LIAT COLLINS

favorable, daylight saving time in 1997 and 1998 will continue until October.

Ramon, also mindful of religious objections, said the proposal had been approved by his predecessor Ehud Barak.

Energy Minister Gonen Segev said the earlier daylight saving time translates into savings of \$11 million.

Avraham Poraz (Meretz), who initiated the change along with committee chairman Yehoshua Matza (Likud), said that as a hot country, Israel should have a daylight saving time that lasts until the end of October, as in Europe and the US.

Although Avraham Verdiger (United Torah Judaism) said the issue should not be turned into a religious-secular battle, Yigal Bibi (National Religious Party) accused the government of being cut off from Jewish tradition. He said since the Pessah seder can only start after dark, children would not be able to stay up for the whole service. Other religious MKs noted the problem of Sephardi Jews, who have to get up for pre-dawn penitential prayers during the month before Rosh Hashana.

A possible compromise, suggested by Ramon and Matza, is to use this year as a test for the future, based on the survey results.

'Non-Orthodox religious council members could increase efficacy' Councilwoman Hoffman: More info can be accessed

THE mission of a non-Orthodox member of a religious council would be both financial and moral, said Jerusalem councilwoman Anat Hoffman.

Hoffman had originally been nominated by Meretz to serve on the Jerusalem Religious Council and the petition to the High Court of Justice, to disallow objections to prospective religious council members because they belong to the Conservative or Reform movements, was filed in her name.

Since then, however, the Knesset passed a law banning local council members from sitting on religious councils.

Hoffman noted that the Jerusalem Religious Council, which has a NIS 32 million budget, has been consistently criticized by both the state comptroller and city comptroller, mainly for nepotism and waste.

Money given to families of yeshiva students, or to the needy

BACKGROUND

HAIM SHAPIRO

before Pessah, is not allocated according to set criteria, she said. At the same time, the council regularly predicts it will have far more income than it actually generates. This is partially because fees for such services as ritual baths are not always collected, she said.

Hoffman also said there has never been a cross-check of the lists of kashrut inspectors and those receiving draft deferments as full-time yeshiva students. People enjoying such deferments should not be employed by the council, she said.

With regard to these issues, the main purpose of the non-Orthodox council members would be to gain access to information about the council's workings and to make it public, she said. It is the public, after all, that pays for the

council's operations.

On another level, she said, the non-Orthodox members could help improve the council's services in a manner that would bridge the gap between the council and the non-observant public. She cited as an example the women advisers employed by the council to talk to prospective brides on family purity. These counselors, Hoffman said, convey a mixture of superstition and misinformation.

These meetings could serve to introduce the brides to some of Judaism's most ancient traditions, she said; instead, they are the object of jokes.

"They could make this interaction less pathetic," she said.

However, she added, even if non-Orthodox representatives joined the religious council, they would still be only two members out of 31. Their only way of really influencing the council would be through the public.



Maxie, a 1½-month-old leopard cub stolen from the Ramat Gan Safari Saturday night, was discovered by police yesterday at the home of a young man in Givat Shmuel. He was safely returned to the park and reunited with his mother, Maggie. (Dan Osovsky/Israel Sun)

WEATHER

Jerusalem	8-17
Haifa	10-20
Tiberias	10-21
Akko	8-21
Samaría	8-17
Tel Aviv	11-20
Beersheba	7-20
Dead Sea	10-23
Eilat	13-24

Forecast: Partly cloudy. Possibility of light rain in the north.

AROUND THE WORLD

Location	Low	High	Forecast
American	22	28	partly
Berlin	12	18	clear
Buenos Aires	21	27	clear
Calcutta	24	30	cloudy
Chicago	18	24	cloudy
Colombia	22	28	clear
Frankfurt	12	18	clear
Hong Kong	24	30	cloudy
London	12	18	clear
Los Angeles	16	22	clear
Madrid	14	20	clear
Moscow	10	16	clear
New York	18	24	clear
Paris	12	18	clear
Rome	14	20	clear
Sydney	16	22	clear
Tokyo	18	24	clear
Toronto	10	16	clear
Vancouver	12	18	clear

Rabbis: Government can't tell us what to say

HAIM SHAPIRO

THE Chief Rabbinical Council yesterday told Religious Affairs Minister Shimon Shetreet that neither a minister nor any government has the right to tell rabbis what they could or could not say.

At the same time, Shetreet told the rabbis that he would continue to explore the legal venues according to which rabbis could be made accountable for their utterances.

"The council was almost

oanymous," said Haifa Chief Rabbi She'ar Yashuv Cohen. Cohen added that it even appeared to most of the council that signatories could do nothing to prevent the republication of a halachic ruling according to which it was forbidden to evacuate settlements, even if they did not want to authorize the republication.

It was the republication last month of an advertisement in

Hatzefeh, the National Religious Party daily, which had aroused Shetreet's ire. Shetreet said that all signatories who were state-employed rabbis or rabbinical court judges should disassociate themselves from the ruling.

In response, former Ashkenazi chief rabbi Avraham Shapir said yesterday that any attempt to tell rabbis what to say is a "desecration." Rabbis are not civil servants, but are the appointees of the public, Shapir said.

Winning cards

In yesterday's Mifal Hapayis daily Chance card draw, the lucky cards were the 10 of spades, queen of hearts, queen of diamonds, and queen of clubs.

Gene linked to adventurous behavior

JUDY SIEGEL

ISRAELI and US researchers have for the first time isolated a gene linked to a specific normal personality trait. The gene, called D4DR (fourth dopamine receptor gene) and located on the 11th chromosome, is said to be responsible for 10 percent of people's novelty-seeking or adventurous behavior.

The discovery was made by doctors at Soroka Hospital and the Beersheba Mental Health Center and at Jerusalem's Herzog Memorial-Ezra Nashim Hospital, who tested 124 healthy Israelis. It was duplicated by doctors from the US National Cancer Institute on 500 people of various ethnic groups at the University of Maryland.

Prof. Haim Belmaker of Beersheba, who adapted a 100-question personality test developed in the US to identify risk-taking behavior, said yesterday that, "The fact that the study was successfully duplicated - by a US team that included Dr. Jonathan Benjamin of Soroka - with the same results is even more important than the original study. Scientists often make a discovery that does not prove itself in subsequent studies; hot in this case, it repeated itself in an entirely different population."

People who score low on the novelty-seeking test tend to be exploratory, fickle, excitable, quick tempered, and extravagant, while those who score high are more stoic, loyal, reflective, frugal, rigid, and even tempered.

Dr. Richard Ebstein, head of the research department at Herzog Hospital, noted that the D4DR gene was discovered in the US in 1991. "Its functioning is expressed in the limbic part of the brain - the section involved in emotions - and binds with high affinity to clozapine, a drug used to treat schizophrenia."

"Our gene increases the incidence of risk-taking behavior in an individual by 10 percent," Ebstein said. "You might think that isn't very much, but if you could find a gene that raises IQ by that amount, for example, it would be a major discovery."

"I am very pleased that it is responsible for only 10 percent of such behaviors," added Belmaker, "since this has the smell of something real; it's complicated and hard to explain. There are no more genes to be discovered that are solely responsible for conditions, such as Tay-Sachs disease or eye color. Most conditions and behaviors are multi-determined by a large number of genes as well as the family, the school, and the whole environment."

'Ouman has enough orders to stay open six more months'

BILL HUTMAN

"THERE is no doubt that Ouman Knitting Mills will remain open for another six months," Hisadrut Chairman Amir Peretz said yesterday, after a stream of orders for sweaters poured into the embattled Ofakim subsidiary of Polgat.

The orders came from government ministries, major unions, and various public bodies.

Deputy Defense Minister Ori Orr informed Peretz that Defense Ministry Director-General David Ivry had agreed in principle to order 75,000 sweaters for the IDF, and Internal Security Minister Moshe Shahal said the police would order 10,000. A similar order came in from the management and workers at Kupat Holim Clalit. More were ordered by several unions, among

them those at the Israel Electric Corporation, Bezeq, and the Dead Sea Works.

Negotiations between the Histadrut and Polgat on reopening Ouman were to begin last night or this morning.

Meanwhile, the national emergency committee formed in Ofakim, which includes the heads of labor councils, unions, and the Textile Workers Union, yesterday called for a two-hour warning strike throughout the textile industry on Thursday.

"The committee will soon call on the Histadrut to proclaim a general warning strike to show identity with and exert pressure on behalf of workers in Ofakim," said Pini Kabbalo, chairman of the association of local labor councils. (Itim)

Police: We need more personnel to fight road accidents

BILL HUTMAN

THE police desperately need additional manpower to effectively deal with road accidents. Cmdr. Ya'acov Burovsky, head of the national traffic police, said yesterday evening, following a special one-day campaign to crack down on driving offenses.

With over 1,000 policemen on traffic duty, aided by two helicopters, only 13 accidents were reported, leaving one person seriously and several others lightly and moderately hurt.

On a normal day, there are only about 200 police on traffic duty, eighty-five accidents, and at

least one death, said Burovsky.

He said the government last year approved an extra 425 traffic policemen, but funding was never found for them.

The campaign, entitled "A Quiet Day on the Road," was a joint operation of the police, army, and the non-profit group "The World Belongs to the Careful," which works to prevent traffic accidents.

Nearly 1,500 tickets were issued, and 81 licenses suspended. Some 47 cars were pulled off the road because of mechanical problems.



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38	33.39	44.22	56	75.42	105.16
40	36.34	48.19	58	81.57	115.69
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